

Teacher Attitudes  
and the  
Emotionally/Behaviourally Disordered Middle School Student

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## ABSTRACT

Inclusionary practices prescribe that children, regardless of exceptionality shall benefit from receiving educational service in the context of the regular class setting. The resulting elimination of separate special classes could be viewed as an economic advantage. In point of fact, many school boards and districts in both Canada and the United States are moving towards implementation of inclusionary practice, possibly for the above stated reason. Regardless, inclusion as it relates to the emotionally/behaviourally disordered youth in our school systems may not be successful. Regular education teachers may not be prepared professionally or personally to deal with this very special student population. This study focused on teacher attitude in this regard. As well, possible factors that may lead to successful inclusion of these students are examined. Of these, teacher experience, education specific to the disability of emotional/behavioural disordered combined with teacher self-perception of success appear to hold the greatest promise. In view of these findings, recommendations are made for professional practice and future research directions.

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## CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM

### Introduction

The course of educational theory and practice concerning the placement of special needs students in the 1990's is currently being restructured by a philosophy known as inclusion. This "buzz word" for such a practice has been previously known as integration and/or mainstreaming. The move towards restructuring resulting in inclusionary practice can be found on both sides of the Canada/U.S. border. Issues relating to these practices have been well documented (Bratten, Kauffman, Bratten, Polsgrove & Nelson, 1988; Cook, Cullinan, Epstein, Forness, Hallahan, Kauffman, Lloyd, Nelson, Polsgrove, Sabornie, Strain, & Walker, 1990; Mesinger, 1985; Sabornie & Kauffman, 1985; Semmel, Abernathy, Butera & Lesar, 1991). Additionally, research studies with respect to advantages/disadvantages, methodologies, strategies and educational benefits are voluminous (Council for Children with Behavioural Disorders, 1989; Downing, Simpson & Myles, 1990; Schonert & Cantor, 1991; Zaragoza, Vaughn & McIntosh, 1991). Of particular interest to this study is the inclusion of the

emotionally/behaviourally disordered student. The key to the possible success or possible failure of inclusionary practices of the E/BD student rests largely in the hands of the regular classroom teachers who will be receiving these children into their classrooms. As the regular teaching staff spend more time with the E/BD students in their classrooms they will "in many cases become the major available change agents for the child [E/BD student]" (Kelly, Bullock & Dykes, 1977). Success will depend largely upon the regular teachers' level of confidence and self-perception of teacher success in dealing with the E/BD student. That level of confidence may well be affected by many variables. Variables such as:

- . grade level taught (Larrivee & Cook, 1979);
- . years experience in the classroom;
- . professional knowledge and skill in this area of exceptionality (Stephens & Braun, 1980);
- . availability of support and information services (Myles & Simpson, 1992);
- . availability of on-going inservice for teacher education (O'Reilly & Duquette, 1988);
- . preparation of the educational system to effectively deal with the

change in philosophy (Wilson, 1988); and, . teacher resource (Cook et al., 1990; Larrivee & Cook, 1979; O'Reilly & Duquette, 1988) will affect the overall success of any inclusion initiatives undertaken by educational systems. Given the large number of variables cited (it is not by any means an exhaustive list), and given the rapidity with which the practice of inclusion is being implemented, it is safe to assume that the system has not been prepared but rather has been forced to react to economic factors. What remains is the regular education teacher in the classroom faced with an increasing student population for which he/she is ill-prepared to deal with, let alone instruct. In short, the attitude of the receiving regular education teachers may largely influence the effectiveness of inclusionary initiatives either positively or negatively for this specific group of handicapped students (Algozzine, Mercer & Countermine, 1977; Antonak, 1980; Brophy, 1983; Brophy & Rohrkemper, 1981; Downing, Simpson & Myles, 1990; Silberman, 1969).

Of specific interest to the author and to this study is the practice of inclusion as it applies to the middle school population of E/BD students. The author is currently involved with the delivery

of service to emotionally/behaviourally disordered youth at these grade levels (grades six through eight) in an urban school board. Through the use of a pilot study, the author has determined that teacher attitude and confidence level may well have a dramatic effect on the potential success of inclusionary initiatives in the middle schools.

### Issues

Given that the "change agent" for the E/BD student in the regular classroom will become the regular education teacher, then issues surrounding the ability of those teachers to be effective and to perceive success with these students becomes critical. These issues will relate to the teacher's approach to the E/BD student. Issues relating to teacher perception, teacher attitude and teacher misconception of the disability may have a dramatic impact on the successful inclusion of E/BD students. Perceptions of "problem ownership" and "intentionality of behaviour" combined with dealing with personally offensive behaviour that may be highly disruptive in the regular class setting are issues that threaten success for the E/BD child (Brophy & Rohrkemper, 1981). When teachers perceive

that students are intentionally misbehaving and thus are capable of taking charge of their own problem behaviour, then teachers have removed themselves from the responsibility of dealing with the student as one who has a disability. This attitudinal approach fosters the misconception that the E/BD student does not have a disability, but simply chooses to behave in an offensive manner, a manner that results in a teacher response based on containment and control and, ultimately, punishment (Cook et al., 1990). Attitude is very closely linked to perception. A teacher who perceives the disability to be one of intentionality and therefore controllable by the student may have a vastly different attitudinal approach than a teacher who has an understanding of the presenting behaviour as a function of the disability. Teacher attitude, perception and possible misconceptions of this disability may well preclude any possible success for the E/BD student in the context of inclusion in the regular education classroom. This thesis will examine these issues as they apply to the E/BD student faced with inclusion into the regular education classroom by determining more clearly the attitude and abilities of Ontario teachers as they confront more emotionally/behaviourally disordered students in their classrooms.

## Purpose and Rationale

The purpose of this study is to determine if there exists prevailing negative or positive attitudes towards the population of students who are disabled by an emotional or behavioural disorder. If so, what implications does this attitude have upon the successful outcome for these students in our educational systems? The implications of this research may help professionals in the field of education approach the issue of inclusion with a better understanding of the needs of the teacher dealing with the E/BD child in the regular class setting.

The inclusion debate has strong proponents as well as opponents on both sides of the 49th parallel. Proponents of inclusion cite many reasons for such a radical reformation of the education system, stating that all students are special, and that all teachers may best serve all students in a more collaborative approach. Beyond this, justification becomes rather confused, at best (CCBD, 1989, pp. 201-202). In this position paper on the Regular Education Initiative (REI) in the United States, the Council for Children with Behavioural Disorders refers to the historical perspective of a single system of education that did not serve the E/BD student population well; that

the Reagan-Bush administration reduced education funding resulting in reduced services for E/BD students; and that the passage of Public Law 94-142 went far to begin to protect the rights of these students to an appropriate and equal educational opportunity. The authors report that the single system resulted in exclusion for the E/BD student (p. 204). They further suggest that with the implementation of the REI, this again may come to be the case resulting in a rediscovery of the need for special education services in the future. While the position of CCBD as stated remains to be the encouragement of research initiatives that may result in better servicing for the E/BD student there remains the concern that "Nevertheless, the REI, as presently described in the literature, threatens to undo much of the yet unfinished advocacy for appropriate education of behaviourally disordered students" (p. 205). The authors further state that "Implementation of the REI will reinforce the view that students' offensive behaviour is *their* problem and could be dealt with through less complicated and more punitive disciplinary processes" (p. 206). Given that E/BD students have been found to have the highest rejection rates among regular educators (Vandivier & Vandivier, 1981, cited in Downing, Simpson &

Myles, 1990) the implications for emotionally/behaviourally disordered youth in the regular "inclusive" classroom are threefold: much of the progress in advocating and protecting the rights of these children will be undone; regular education teacher biases against this particular student population will be strengthened; resulting in the exclusion rather than inclusion of these students from our educational systems. In Canada the situation becomes at once more profoundly acute. This is due largely to the fact that education in Canada is legislated provincially/territorially rather than federally. This difference in legislation has resulted in a great variance of definition, identification, and servicing with respect to the E/BD student in Canada (Dworet & Rathgeber, 1990). Dworet and Rathgeber further pointed out that only two of the jurisdictions had legislation in place that was similar to that of the United States' P.L. 94-142. (p.202). They note that while there has been a positive move towards "recognizing the need to program for these students" (p. 207), they also point out that given the prevalence rates reported, this population of students is receiving less service than it was in 1981 (p. 207). They conclude that "In order to be more responsive to the needs of behaviourally disordered students, the



P/T [Provincial/Territorial] authorities should utilize their powers of regulation to ensure that the large number of unidentified students are provided with appropriate service" (p. 208). As has occurred in the United States, there has developed a similar movement in Canada towards the inclusion of special needs students in the regular classroom. If the forecast for educational services and effective programming for E/BD students in the States can be described as gloomy, then the situation in Canada would have to be put in terms of critical. The success of any educational system rests solely on the success of the practitioners in the field. With respect to the emotionally/behaviourally disordered youth in our systems, the practice of education is rapidly being transferred from the specially trained teachers to the general/regular education staff. The research and historical record, however, appear to prescribe the need for an array of service delivery options. With the responsibility for service falling on the shoulders of regular education then it must be determined how effective the practice of inclusion might be. The effectiveness of the regular educator must be examined and deficiencies and strengths discovered in order to plan for the future. The examination of the attitudes held by regular educators is of

primary importance in this study.

### Theoretical Framework

Much research has been conducted with regard to teacher attitude and its resultant effect on student progress. Brophy and Rohrkemper (1981) studied the issue of "problem ownership" and teachers' perceptions of the ability of E/BD students to control their behaviours. Their findings led them to the conclusion that the E/BD student was perceived as intentionally misbehaving and the resultant strategies in dealing with these students were based on the concepts of punishment and control. The issue of teacher attitude and expectancy effects as it relates to E/BD student success in the regular classroom, has been researched by many others (Algozzine, Mercer & Countermine, 1977; Antonak, 1980; Blease, 1983; Brophy, 1983; Brophy & Rohrkemper, 1981; Safran & Safran, 1985; Silberman, 1969; Ysseldyke & Foster, 1978). The findings of other researchers have been definitive in conclusions reached that teachers do respond negatively to emotionally/behaviourally disordered students and that success for these students has been restricted as a result. Research has been

varied in approach but the findings are in agreement and support the findings of Brophy and Rohrkemper (1981). Brophy (1983) explored the question of teacher expectations and the self-fulfilling prophecy. Algozzine, Mercer and Countermine (1977) studied the effects of "labels" on teacher expectations and student behaviour. Downing, Simpson and Myles (1990) examined teacher perceptions of non-academic skills required by mainstreamed E/BD students as well as learning disabled students in order for placement to be maintained. Feldman and Theiss (1982) researched the hypothesis of teacher and student working in concert in what they termed a "joint pygmalion effect." Ysseldyke (1978) studied teacher bias. Silberman (1969) researched teacher behaviour towards the "rejected" student (i.e., by description, children whose behaviour is similar to that of the E/BD student). Antonak (1980) devised a hierarchy of attitudes toward exceptionality. Cook et al. (1990) summarized much of the research findings in a compelling paper that portrayed the current attitudes and resulting practices as being severely lacking in effectiveness and positive prognosis for these students. To summarize, the research cited above reveals that the academic and behavioural progress of the E/BD student in the regular class setting

was limited, and that teacher-student interaction was often described as negative and non-productive. What the researchers concluded was that the regular education teachers simply did not wish to have E/BD students in their classrooms, they did not feel confident in dealing with them, and saw little chance for success academically or socially. O'Reilly and Duquette (1988) found that "teachers do not feel competent teaching exceptional children in the regular class" (p. 12) and further, "after trying out this innovation, they are not convinced that it is a sound pedagogical practice" (p.12). O'Reilly and Duquette cite the following concerns of teachers as contributing factors that led teachers to this belief: teachers are not convinced that there is much learning taking place; the academic progress of the handicapped students does not meet teacher expectation; mainstreaming is disruptive; they are not able to attend to the individual needs of the handicapped student; and finally, regular student progress is hampered. Carlberg and Kavale (1980) conducted a meta-analysis of special versus regular class placement for exceptional children. Their findings provide the statistical evidence that E/BD students do not benefit as much from regular class placement as they do from segregated class placement. They

report that the E/BD student showed an improvement of 11 percentile ranks in the special (segregated) class placement. "Thus the average E/BD student in special class placement was better off than 61% of their counterparts in regular classes" (p. 301). Why? Why are teachers' attitudes negative? Why do these students experience poor success in the regular classes? These are questions that demand to be answered. In an attempt to find the answers the question that must be examined is: "What are the key elements that can positively effect change?" In much of the research studies cited above, many of the researchers determined a need for on-going teacher education and support services. Stephens and Braun (1980) determined that "teachers who had taken courses in special education were more willing to accept handicapped students into their classes ( $p < .01$ ) than those who had not taken such courses" (p. 292). From their findings they concluded that teacher confidence and willingness to integrate "increased as the number of special education courses increased" (p. 293). Stephens and Braun (1980) also found that "as subject matter became more important, (i.e., at the grade 7 and 8 level) teachers became less accepting of individual differences" (pp. 293-294). The research cited above suggests that

teacher attitude can be determined through the relationship between teacher perception of their success and resultant confidence level, teacher competence, and teacher perception of student success as it pertains to the handicapped student in the regular class placement. Teacher attitude and confidence and perception of success was also enhanced by teacher education, specifically in the field of special education. Of particular note was the fact that with the exception of O'Reilly and Duquette (1988) all of the research studies cited herein were conducted in the United States. The purpose of the present investigation was to sample a number of regular classroom teachers in Canada, specifically, in Ontario, to determine if a similar relationship would be found in this educational environment.

### The Research Questions

Through the research conducted in this study, using a sample of educational professionals in the field, the following questions were addressed:

. do grade six, seven and eight teachers express confidence in teaching the E/BD student in the context of the regular class setting;

- . do grade six, seven and eight teachers with more years experience feel more confident in teaching the E/BD student in their classes than less experienced teachers;
- . do grade six, seven and eight teachers believe that they are well qualified and/or trained to teach E/BS students;
- . do grade six, seven and eight teachers exhibit negative biases towards the E/BD student population;
- . do grade six, seven and eight teachers have negative expectations of E/BD students;
- . do grades six, seven and eight teachers with more years teaching experience hold a more positive attitude towards the E/BD child in their regular classes than their less experienced peers;
- . do grade six, seven and eight teachers with more course work in special education and/or course work specific to the needs of the E/BD child have a more positive attitude towards the E/BD child in their regular classes than those teachers without course work in these areas;
- . do female regular education teachers express greater confidence than male regular educators in teaching E/BD students in the regular setting; and,

. do grade six, seven and eight teachers believe that E/BD students should be given the opportunity to participate in the regular class setting wherever possible?

Implications of the research findings may assist in determining how, as educators, we might be successful in the implementation of inclusionary practices for emotionally/behaviourally disordered students. Of secondary concern will be an examination of the following relationships:

- . teacher experience;
- . gender differences; and,
- . teacher perception of success.

### Definition of Terms

The following terms are used throughout this research study:

- . **attitude** – a set of beliefs held by an individual which will influence his/her perception of a person and/or situation which will determine how that individual will act.
- . **contagion** – the transference, through contact, of ideas, attitudes, behaviour, emotions and the like.
- . **emotionally/behaviourally disordered** – a population of



students whose disability manifests itself in emotional/behavioural manners that restrict their progress or the progress of others through the educational system academically and/or socially.

. **inclusion** – used here to refer to the practice of mainstreaming special needs students within the regular classroom as full time students.

. **integration** – refers to the practice of gradually mainstreaming the exceptional student into the regular educational venue.

. **mainstreaming** –the practice of placing special needs students in regular education classes (usually age appropriate) so that they may have the experience of being in the "mainstream" of education.

. **middle school** – typically refers to grades seven and eight (sometimes grade six and/or grade nine) wherein students receive a rotary instructional program similar to that found in the secondary school setting.

. **R.E.I.** – regular education initiative, the term attached to the movement to implement the practice of inclusion.

. **regular class teacher** – an educator who teaches in the "traditional" grade levels in a school setting.

. **resource teacher** – an educator with specialized training who

will support and assist the regular classroom teacher.

. **resourcing** - refers to the practice of offering support and/or aid as needed, in this context, offered from a teacher and/or consultant well versed in behaviour exceptionalities and effective practices to an individual and/or group of teachers.

. **self-contained classroom** - denotes a segregated class setting for students identified as exceptional; integration into the regular program is very limited, if at all.

. **service delivery** - a process by which the specific needs of exceptional students are met.

. **teacher bias** - a primarily affective reaction expressed as an attitude stemming from the teacher's personality and his/her definition of his/her role as teacher (Brophy & Good, 1974).

. **teacher expectations** - a primarily cognitively derived prediction of probable future achievement and behaviour based upon given data (i.e., past and present record of academic achievement and behaviour) (Brophy & Good, 1974).

. **withdrawal program** - an educational program offered to those students who need a smaller class setting than the usual with the benefit of a teacher who has specialized training in the identified

disability of the student.

### Summary

Much literature has examined both the educational value as well as the educational concerns of inclusionary practice of special needs students. This study was conducted to examine teacher attitude and confidence as these pertain to the emotionally/behaviourally disordered student in the regular classroom. These were determined through an examination of the demographic information supplied by the teachers in relation to teacher responses to a questionnaire, developed for the purpose of the study and administered to grade six, seven and eight teachers in one urban school board in southern Ontario.

The first chapter of this thesis introduced the purpose and the rationale for the study. Chapter Two reviews literature which is specifically related to the examination of teacher attitude and its effects on student performance. Chapter Three outlines the procedures and methodology to be used in the study. Analysis of results and educational implications will be offered in Chapters Four and Five respectively.

## CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

### Introduction

The literature with respect to teacher expectancy effects, teacher bias, self-fulfilling prophecy, labelling effects, teacher confidence, and teacher perception is plentiful. With respect to this thesis a review of the literature was conducted as it applies to teacher attitude towards the inclusion of emotionally/behaviourally disordered students. Do regular education teachers hold negative biases towards this particular student population? Are teachers confident of working successfully in the regular education setting with this group? These are questions that were explored through the literature. Material was selected that held particular relevance to the questions being posed.

### Theoretical Framework

The mainstreaming of special needs students has been an on-going point for discussion among educators, policy makers and researchers alike. The areas of concern surrounding the issue of implementation of mainstreaming appear to be: achieving positive results (academic and social) for the students; instilling confidence

in the teaching staff of the probability of student success; and finally, satisfying the administrative needs of the educational systems that are currently struggling to implement mainstreaming initiatives. These concerns are perhaps in their sharpest focus as they pertain to the emotionally/behaviourally disordered student population. As educational systems move towards the integration and wholesale inclusion of this particular body of the student population, the focus of concern appears to be the ability of the regular classroom teacher population to effect the institution of successful programming for these students in spite of the documented biases against this group (Algozzine, Mercer & Counterline, 1978; Cook et al., 1990; Downing, Simpson & Myles, 1990; Good & Brophy, 1972; Semmel, Abernathy, Butera & Lesar, 1991; Ysseldyke & Foster, 1978). The possible inability of regular classroom teachers to overcome preconceived attitudes that view E/BD students as unable to succeed in the regular education setting may doom this group to successive failure. In essence, will the so-called "Pygmalion effect" (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968) prevail to the detriment of the E/BD students? The research on this subject is massive, detailed, contradictory and at times, somewhat

inconclusive. The truth may, in fact, lie somewhere in the sum total of the research currently available and may emerge more clearly as more and more research efforts are undertaken.

### Literature Review

The mainstreaming of the E/BD student is perhaps one of the most debated topics of the initiatives currently under consideration to destream special needs students. Educators appear to be most reluctant to accept the E/BD student into their regular classrooms. The perception and understanding of the E/BD student can be viewed as largely negative. The resulting attitude towards working with these students in the context of the regular classroom setting has been characterized by reluctance, rejection, and low success expectations (Cooper & Good, 1983; Good & Brophy, 1972; Helton & Oakland, 1977; Horne, 1985). The power and influence of teacher expectation has been documented as an "empirically supported fact exerting an important influence on student achievement, behaviour, and self-esteem" (Algozzine & Curran, 1978; Brophy & Good, 1974; Bryan, 1974, Bryan & Wheeler, 1972, Hersh & Walker, 1983, Kornblau & Keogh, 1980, Maddox-McGinty, 1979, cited in Semmel, Abernathy,

Butera & Lesar, 1991). Educator bias against mainstreaming students identified as behaviourally disordered has been identified (Forness, 1979, Hollinger, 1987, cited in Downing, Simpson & Myles, 1990). Antonak (1980) employed "ordering theory" for the purpose of devising a "hierarchy of attitudes toward exceptionality" (p.232).

This study determined a hierarchal scale on two levels: one focused toward community-integration of the exceptional student; the other focused toward school-integration of the exceptional student. Of his findings Antonak stated:

It is interesting to note that the behaviourally disordered were rated less favourably than all other types of exceptionality other than the severely and profoundly impaired on both the community and school integration statements.  
(p.236)

Other studies have indicated that when teachers are given a choice of receiving identified learning disabled students or behaviourally disordered students, teachers demonstrated a definite preference towards the LD children (Vandivier & Vandivier, 1981, Williams & Algozzine, 1979, cited in Downing, Simpson & Myles, 1990). Further, behaviourally disordered students had the highest

rejection rates of all mainstreamed students (Vandivier & Vandivier, 1981, Williams & Algozzine, 1979, cited in Downing, Simpson & Myles, 1990). A possible cause for this may be one of perception, that is, teachers perceive these students as having undesirable personality traits (Helton & Oakland, 1976) and will reject them based on this perception (Good & Brophy, 1972; Helton & Oakland, 1976; Silberman, 1969).

These students are often held in very low esteem by both peers and teachers, leading to exclusion, rejection, neglect, poor instruction, and a low quality of life in school. Also, teachers and administrators often do not agree about how to handle students whose behaviour is extremely distasteful to them. (Cook et al., 1990, p.23)

### Teacher Attitude

Wilson (1988) acknowledged that teacher attitude can be very powerful, relating attitude to "belief systems which permeate all aspects of the delivery process" (p. 2). Semmel, Abernathy, Butera and Lesar (1991) determined that current teacher preference reflected a belief that special needs students were best served in



the current "pullout programs" in elementary schools. Further, teachers did not perceive themselves as having the ability to effectively teach curriculum requirements as dictated by policy and concurrently make modifications and individualization required to achieve success with special needs students (Semmel, Abernathy, Butera & Lesar, 1991). Silberman (1969) examined the influence of teacher attitude through observation of teacher behaviour to determine if there was first, a "link" between attitudes and behaviour; and second, to examine "the relationship between specific attitudes and behaviours" (p. 402). Teacher attitudes towards students were grouped into four categories: attachment, concern, indifference, and rejection. Teacher behaviour was measured through frequency of behaviour exhibited towards the four attitudinal groups specified above. Behaviours were measured under the categories of contact, positive evaluation, negative evaluation, and acquiescence. Through the process of interview and observation of both teachers and students Silberman was able to determine that teachers "communicate certain attitudes with greater consistency and clarity than they do others" (p. 405). Of particular interest here are the results of Silberman's work as they relate to E/BD students. These

are the students that Silberman describes as those students who received the highest level of negative contact and negative evaluation. Silberman noted that "rejection" students created conflict for teachers in their dealings with them.

On the one hand, teachers attempted to achieve a measure of rapport with students they rejected by giving them frequent attention and praise. On the other hand, they counteracted such positive expressions by punishing the students through denial, criticism, and even expulsion from the class. (p. 406)

Silberman was able to determine three major issues as a result of his study: teachers do express their attitudes towards students through their actions; different attitudes are expressed through different actions; and students (who are referred to as the recipients of the teachers' actions) are very much aware of the attitudes being expressed towards themselves and others. In conclusion, Silberman states:

Thus, it is likely that the daily classroom experience of recipient students is significantly altered by teachers' actions which express their attitudes. These actions not only serve to communicate to students the regard in which they are held by a

significant adult, but they also guide the perceptions of, and behaviour toward, these students by their peers. (p.407)

In a replication and extension of Silberman's study (1969), Good and Brophy (1972) were able to substantiate Silberman's work and were found to be in agreement with Silberman in their determination that "Attitudes toward individual students significantly affected the teachers' behaviour" (p.618). With respect to "rejection" students Good and Brophy found that this group received more criticism, were viewed as being unable to do anything right, were under constant surveillance, received less feedback, had fewer reading turns, and teacher behaviour towards this group involved efforts effecting behaviour control as evidenced by the extreme number of behavioural contacts with the teachers (pp. 618 - 622). In contrast to Silberman who "reported that teachers had similar contact frequencies with rejected students as with others, but they both praised and criticised them more frequently" (Silberman, 1969, cited in Good & Brophy, 1972, p. 622), Good and Brophy found that "rejection" students in fact received much less public contact from the teachers and that any such contact tended to involve criticism thus making it "clear that teachers in this study rejected and avoided rejection

students" (p. 623). When these two studies are considered jointly with the following focal points in mind – the observation of Silberman that both students and their peers are very much aware of teacher attitudes and behaviours; and that both studies were conducted using primary grade students and teachers – the question is raised as to what happens to the so-called "rejection" students as attitudes and behaviours become more entrenched as this particular group of students passes into the upper grades. In respect to the inclusion issue of E/BD students, teacher attitude may create a formidable obstacle to the success of any such initiative.

### Teacher Attitude and Inclusion

Larrivee and Cook (1979) addressed the role of teacher attitude as "a far more potent variable in determining the success of mainstreaming" (p.316). Their study consisted of the development and distribution of a teacher opinion survey relative to mainstreaming learning disabled children. Of the 2500 questionnaires sent out to 250 randomly selected schools spread out over six states they reported a return of approximately 50%. It was believed that this was a viable representation that would be

indicative of teacher attitudes and perceptions. Their findings indicated that teacher attitude became progressively more negative as the grade level taught increased, with the greatest level of negativism being at the junior high level. Additionally, they found that teacher attitude was more positively influenced by the teacher's perception of administrative support and level of availability of support services. It was concluded that the single most important variable of teacher attitude towards mainstreaming was teacher perception of their degree of success in dealing with the special needs child (Larivee & Cook, 1979). As with the findings of Larivee and Cook (1979), Green, Rock and Weisenstein (1983) also found that "increased knowledge may go hand in hand with increased acceptance of exceptional children in the classroom" (p.183).

### The "Pygmalion" Effect

The "pygmalion effect" (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968) has been well documented and debated. The influence of "teacher behaviour to different groups [of students] became an important influence on the children's achievement" (Rist, 1970, p.411). To state that teacher

bias exists would be quite accurate but to take it one step further and state that teacher bias against the exceptional student maintains low achievement levels would be to enter an area of research that has generated much debate. This particular focus of educational research was brought into the forefront by Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) in their much publicised study referred to as the Oak School experiment. This experiment examined the effect of teacher expectations and the perceived "self-fulfilling prophecy" on student achievement, the results of which were published under the title *Pygmalion in the Classroom* (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968) and is often referred to simply as the "pygmalion study." At least part of the controversy relates to the fact that the Oak School experiment has never been replicated (Brophy, 1983) with similar and therefore validating results. According to Brophy (1983), the attempts to replicate the study conducted by Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) involved the use of "phony" information in an attempt to create teacher expectations. While Brophy does point out the many criticisms surrounding the "pygmalion" issue he does in fact agree that there is enough sustaining evidence to support the theory in general (p. 632). Of note is that "teacher expectations accounted for

3% – 9% of the variance in adjusted achievement scores" (McDonald & Elias, 1976, cited in Brophy, 1983). Further studies showed agreement with these findings (Brattesani, Weinstein, Middlestadt & Marshall, 1981, Smith, 1980; cited in Brophy, 1983). These levels appear small but serve the purpose of demonstrating the existence of a "pygmalion effect." Of particular note here is that the above studies were conducted in regular education "average" classes. When examining teacher behaviour as it interacts with students Brophy (1983) makes note that topics to be considered include such variables as teacher personality, large and small group settings, time of year, curriculum content, grade level, and what could be termed as "teacher professionalism"; this refers to the action of teachers adjusting and moderating teaching styles and personalizing curriculum in order to meet student needs (as opposed to a perceived pygmalion effect in operation). Of particular relevance for exceptional E/BD students is the information as it relates to low achievers and negative expectations, "- unfortunately – teachers are more likely to be affected by information leading to negative expectations than information leading to positive expectations" (Mason, 1973, Persell, 1977, Seaver, 1973, cited in Brophy, 1983).

And further, "there is a need for particular focus on how low expectations can cause teachers to limit students' progress" (Brophy, 1983, p. 640). When low expectation students, for example E/BD students, are placed into segregated classes Brophy (1983) warns that "low expectations are more likely to become entrenched norms that channel teacher and student behaviour without ever being seriously questioned" (p. 643). Other research studies have taken the idea of the pygmalion effect one step further in suggesting that not only do students react and respond to teacher expectations but that teachers react and respond to student expectations in what could only be termed a symbiotic relationship dependent on many variables. Carr, Taylor and Robinson (1991) refer to this as the creation of a "social system in which reciprocal influence is the rule" (p. 534). In their study of the effects of student behaviour, specifically, severe misbehaviour, these researchers determined that teachers' curriculae demands were reliably altered and lowered through what they determined to be "punishment" afforded to the teachers by the students through the consistent display of severe misbehaviour. This was in stark contrast to the behaviour of the "non problem" students who "rewarded" the teachers' efforts through



acceptable behaviours. "Thus, the causal process seems to involve a situation in which punishment of teaching efforts results in low rates of task demands" (p. 532), and that "children, rather than adults, may sometimes shape the academic curriculum" (p. 532). These researchers conclude from the findings, that regardless of the effectiveness of educational procedures in "normal situations" (i.e., non-problem children), that these same procedures may "produce poor outcomes, not because the procedures themselves are inadequate, but rather because the procedures generate a high rate of punishment (via child effects) for the agent attempting to use them" (p. 533). They further state that when the teacher does not "maintain his or her treatment behaviour, it is reasonable to expect that treatment effects too will not be maintained" (p. 533). This determination of the existence of a "social system" in which teacher and student are acting and reacting to and with each other has been described by others. In their examination of the so-called pygmalion effect in the classroom, Feldman and Theiss (1982) determined that teacher and student expectations rest one upon the other. This is not to say that self-fulfilling prophecies do not exist, but to consider that they are very complicated as there is more than one factor to

consider here - there is more than one pygmalion in the classroom. "It is thus clear that teacher-student interaction is a complicated phenomenon, with both parties acting as Pygmaliions in the classroom" (Feldman & Theiss, 1982, p. 223). This "joint pygmalion effect" is rather interestingly represented in a study done by Matthews (1982). Matthews presents his work as purely an example of the effect of low teacher expectations referring to "the destructive cycle of self-fulfilling prophecy" (p. 502) and hoped that "it was now evident how teacher expectation effects can harm the achievements of pupils" (p. 502). A closer examination of the material as it was presented revealed that it was not the teachers who created the expectation but rather it was the teachers responding to observed behaviours of the students.

Class 3S students however, were notorious among teachers of the third year, to the extent that a series of meetings was held to discuss their behaviour. As a class they required continual disciplining and in discussion displayed not a sparkle of interest or perception. (p.498)

By comparison Matthews described two other classes as having a "pleasant attitude" which "encouraged a more detailed approach to

the various topics which they were taught" (p.498). Clearly then, one can surmise that what happened here was teachers reacting to the observed behaviours and perceived needs of a class, a group of students that statistically were no different in ability than the other classes, "statistically it contained a very good cross section of third year pupils" (p. 500). It is possible that this is an example of the teachers and students as "pygmaliions" as examined by Feldman and Theiss (1982). This particular study (Matthews, 1982) raises two other issues of concern to teacher expectancy research. Cooper and Good (1983) describe the role of teacher expectancy behaviour as falling into two categories; the first is described as those behaviours that can be classified as "self-fulfilling prophecies" and the second refers to "sustaining expectation effects." These two classifications are differentiated by Cooper and Good as the former creating change and the latter preventing change: self-fulfilling prophecies *create* change in student performance, while sustaining expectation effects *prevent* change in student performance. Self-fulfilling prophecies are visible and dramatic but may infrequently occur in natural classrooms. Sustaining expectation effects are subtle but may

occur frequently. (p. 6)

What has perhaps been unwittingly portrayed by Matthews (1982) is that teachers were unable to effect change with a particular group of students who were perceived as being difficult. It therefore became the expectation that these students would continue to be difficult and were consequentially approached in a manner that sustained the inappropriate behaviour and resulted in, not surprisingly, low achievement. "The problems of 3S were in attitude rather than ability, and led to the assumption that the class was not only badly behaved but unintelligent as well" (Matthews, 1982, p. 500). Matthews goes on to refer to the poor "reputation" that this particular class had garnered for itself and how this affected the approach taken towards it in other subject areas (Matthews, 1982, pp. 500-502). When Matthews referred to the "reputation" of this class, in effect he stated that this class had earned a "label" that the teaching staff taught to, thus creating a "sustaining expectation effect." This brings forth the second research concern when examining teacher attitudes and expectations, that of the effects of labels as they apply to students and the resultant teaching practices. The question; "Are teachers predisposed to the label and

therefore teach to it?" has created yet another body of research that needs to be examined when determining the effect of teacher attitude towards student behaviour, student achievement, and the integration of students with exceptionalities, specifically, those who have been "identified" and "labelled" emotionally/behaviourally disordered.

### Labelling Effects

The use of the word "label" in the context of defining a student by his/her exceptionality denotes an "expectation set" that is significant in the treatment of the so-labelled student by that student's "expectation network" (Finn, 1972, cited in Blease, 1983). The expectation network within the school consists not only of the teacher but also of the students, the environment within the classroom (to include both physical and psychological), the curriculum, curriculum materials, and types of learning activities presented to the students. Outside of the school the expectation network is expanded to include parents, siblings and peers. Finn (1972, cited in Blease, 1983) suggests that:

Expectations formed by teachers, pupils and others over time

are constantly being reinforced and/or modified through the daily events of both classroom and elsewhere, and that they "play a more formidable role in shaping the individual's behaviour". (p. 124)

The expectation set and network act in concert with each other with the culminative effect that once a person is evaluated and assessed (labelled) then it is anticipated that the person (student) "will act in a manner consistent with the assessment (label)" (Blease, 1983, p. 124). Blease goes on to state that as a student moves through the educational system the expectations set by the assessment become more firmly established and are thus more difficult to alter and/or change. In other words, once labelled, the label sticks.

Consequentially, as information accumulates throughout a child's school career, the expectations held by the members of his expectation network are likely to become more firmly established and more resistant to change brought about by any single inconsistent piece of behaviour. (p. 125)

Blease is not remiss in his notation that with the label in place, a student will develop a negative expectancy of the educative process and will himself perform to the label which in turn is reinforced by

the teacher. Foster, Ysseldyke and Reese (1975) ascertained that teachers do in fact respond to the label (this study focussed on the label "emotionally disturbed") with "a mental set based on preconceived expectancies" (p.473). The teacher will then interact with the child from the perception of the bias effect regardless of conflicting behavioural evidence. Should the child respond to the bias then the child has in effect reinforced it, completing the cycle and entrenching the bias. "A series of positive feedback loops is established and an iatrogenic disease is in the making" (p.473). These researchers go on to state the viewpoint that, "The act of labelling another person is a social behaviour which is learned and reinforced" (p.473). They believe that the label "emotionally disturbed" contains certain "evaluative components" and as a result "objective evaluation and treatment of the labelled child becomes problematic" (p.473). In a later study by Algozzine, Mercer, and Countermine (1977) these findings were supported. They determined:

that some of the characteristic disturbances or disabilities thought to exist in children may, in fact, be the result of disturbances in the interface between the child's behaviour and other individuals' attitudes (expectations) toward that

behaviour as determined by the label assigned to the child.

(p. 132)

Ysseldyke and Foster (1978) further examined the labelling effect on teacher expectancies, specifically teachers in the regular classroom reacting to the label of emotionally disturbed as well as learning disabled. Ysseldyke and Foster were able to conclude that:

deviancy labels do result in an alteration of teacher expectancy toward the child so labelled, and this change of expectancy can result in an alteration of a teacher's objective evaluation of a child's behaviour. (p. 615)

The evidence presented in the above studies appears to be fairly consistent in their results. However, in a study of expectancy effects of labels, Reschly and Lamprecht (1979) challenged the proposition that labels create exceptionality rather than the converse. The results of their findings generated several interesting conclusions. Primarily, the study suggests that given enough opportunity over time to observe behaviours that are inconsistent with the label, regular classroom teachers will not retain the expectancy that the label initially generated (p. 57). Reschly and



Lamprecht further concluded that the expectancy effects induced by labelling are decreased as the amount of information is increased and "that decisions made in the virtual absence of relevant information are likely to be stereotypic" (p. 57). Finally, Reschly and Lamprecht conclude that the results of their study suggest that given the opportunity, "teachers ultimately form expectations on the basis of the child's actual behaviour" (p.57). Although this study is "food for thought" it must be noted that the findings contained therein are suggested trends by the authors and can not therefore be accepted as conclusive evidence of teacher behaviour. Also of note is the fact that this particular study (Reschly & Lamprecht, 1979) examined teacher response to the labels "gifted," "normal" and "educable mentally retarded" and did not look at the expectancy effects produced by the label "emotionally/behaviourally disturbed." In a study aimed specifically at teacher response and resultant attitudes towards this particular exceptionality grouping (E/BD) Feldman, Kinnison, Jay and Harth (1983) determined that not only do labels affect teacher response but that teacher response can be differentiated by separating the group into emotionally disturbed and behaviourally disordered. They believed that their findings were

conclusive in that teachers consistently favoured those students who are labelled behaviourally disordered over those students who were labelled emotionally disturbed. Of particular interest is that their "conclusive findings lend substantial support to the differential and detrimental effects of labelling" (p. 197) and that labels:

do reflect inferences critical to these individuals' ability to change behaviour modes (i.e., educability), be educated or eligible for instruction in the least restrictive environment (i.e., mainstreaming potential), and obtain positive prognosis for future life chances.

The conclusion that "labels do influence teacher perceptions" (Feldman, Kinnison, Jay & Harth, 1983) with its subsequent negative effect on mainstreaming possibilities is further supported by Safran and Safran (1985) who put forth the view that "Teacher's perceptions of problem behaviours have substantial impact upon mainstreaming handicapped students" (p.20). The authors suggest that the possible cause for the resistance to mainstreaming E/BD students is the teachers' "overriding concern" regarding "behaviour contagion" or "ripple effect" that teachers perceive will result from

the inclusion of E/BD students in their classes (p.21).

### Contagion Effects

Contagion refers to the ready transmission or spread of an idea, attitude and behaviour from the "behaviour" students to the "regular students." The belief in the fear and concern regarding the contagion effects of inclusion of students in the regular class setting who may demonstrate behaviour concerns is further supported by research conducted by Gersten, Walker and Darch (1988). Through their study of teacher effectiveness and tolerance Gersten, Walker and Darch determined that:

Those teachers with the strongest repertoire of effective teaching techniques say they will tolerate less maladaptive behaviour and that they are more likely to actively resist placement of students with specific handicapping conditions.  
(p.437)

Safran and Safran (1985) were able to determine a significant emphasis on the "contagion effect" (p. 25) within the context of the disruptive student and that such a student would receive a disproportionate amount of negative contact from the teacher as

they would be viewed as the primary cause for classroom disorder.

Safran and Safran state:

Because initial negative perceptions of disruptive students are retained despite documented behavioural improvement (Lewin et al., 1983), these results suggest that the handicapped child or any other child labelled as or reputed to be disruptive may be at a continuing disadvantage in the regular classroom. (pp. 25-26)

The authors suggest that because of the regular teachers' belief in "their responsibility to the welfare of the larger group, intrinsically disruptive behaviours (i.e., negative, aggressive) are least acceptable" (p. 26). "Thus, a regular educator's reluctance to accept a handicapped child may be due less to issues of manageability than time [spent dealing with a small portion of the class population]" (Thompson, White, & Morgan, 1982, cited in Safran & Safran, 1987) and/or fear of behavioural contagion in large group settings (Safran & Safran, 1984, 1985, cited in Safran & Safran, 1987). Further to this was the finding in another study that

elementary teachers are least tolerant of outer-directed behaviours – those that disrupt other children (negative

aggressive, poor peer cooperation). These responses may be a direct consequence of concerns for the well-being of the group; excessive nonacademic management and time expenditure for the one or few at the expense of the many. (p. 242, Safran & Safran, 1987)

This finding is supported in the work of Landon and Mesinger (1989) who identified that intolerable behaviours were those "that are rude, insolent, provocative, hostile, impertinent, surly, threatening, and so forth are hard to tolerate even when one believes that the child has no control over such actions and regardless of the educational setting" (p. 247). The bias of regular education teachers against the mainstreaming of E/BD students can thus be viewed as stemming from negative perceptions of these students. The negative perceptions and subsequent attitudes may well be the result of an issue of ownership and intentionality and a basic conceptual bias in the understanding of E/BD students.

### Conceptual Biases

The labelling biases described in the research may in part be the result of a conceptual bias that the label emotionally/

behaviourally disordered induces. E/BD students are viewed as choosing:

deliberately to exhibit a pattern of social deviance that is highly aversive to others. That is, these children and youth are thought of as capable of behaving in more appropriate ways but are actively deciding not to do so. Thus they are thought of as undeserving. (Cook et al., 1990, p. 19).

At issue here is the concept of problem ownership and intentionality. Brophy and Rohrkemper (1981) conducted a study based on Gordon (1974) who "suggested that identification of who owns the problem is important in examining classroom conflicts" (Gordon, 1974, cited in Brophy & Rohrkemper, 1981, p. 297).

Conflicts or "problems" were categorized into three distinct classes: teacher-owned problems, shared problems, and student-owned problems.

Shared problems are those "in which the teacher and a student interfere with each other's need satisfaction, and student owned problems [are those] in which students' need satisfaction is frustrated by people or events that do not include the teacher." (p. 297)

Of particular interest to this study was the perception of teacher-owned problems. These were described as problems "in which student behaviour interferes with the teacher's meeting his or her own needs or causes the teacher to feel frustrated, upset, irritated, or angry" (p. 297). Specifically these students were identified as those who were typically aggressive towards their peers and were underachievers engaging in frequent off-task behaviours thus creating a "problem for the teacher but do not have a problem themselves (their need satisfaction is not being frustrated)" (Gordon, 1974, cited in Brophy & Rohrkemper, 1981, p. 301). From the results of their study Brophy and Rohrkemper (1983) developed the following conclusions:

That teachers' attributions about self and students differed according to level of problem ownership; that teachers do not look to themselves as the causes, in whole or even in part, of classroom behaviour problems; [statistics from this study] indicate that teachers' attributions concerning students' ability to control their behaviour covary with problem ownership; and finally, the teachers were very likely to see students presenting teacher-owned problems as able to

control their behaviour, and thus blameworthy for the problems they created. (pp. 303-305)

The beliefs as expressed by teachers in this study resulted in the frequent referral of those students perceived as creating teacher-owned problems (i.e., those students identified as "hostile, aggressive and defiant") to parents or school support services (p. 305). On the issue of referral to school support services, Otto (1986) in a study of the findings of Ysseldyke and Algozzine (1983) reported the following:

Who gets referred for psychoeducational evaluation is whoever teachers decide to refer; the actual placement decision has little to do with the data gathered; [placement] decisions are based on sex, socioeconomic status, physical appearance, reason for referral, availability of services, and parents' power in the school system; teachers' referrals [are] the most powerful determiners of who gets special help; and finally, what teachers say they expect to gain from referral is testing and placement. (Otto, 1986, pp. 573-574)

Although the research reported in the study by Otto related specifically to practice in the area of the learning disabled student,



these findings may have relevance to the study of the emotionally/behaviourally disordered student. In light of the research studies and findings described in the foregoing text, the implication that referral practices for the E/BD student would be very similar if not more definitive is most evident. Certainly research from this particular perspective would be most enlightening and useful in determining teacher referral practices with respect to the E/BD child. The study by Brophy and Rohrkemper (1981) does make reference to this issue but falls short of making definitive statements. Brophy and Rohrkemper further determined that teacher-owned problems were believed by teachers to be controllable and intentional. The intentionality of the behaviour is perceived as "resistance to the teacher" (p. 306) with the resulting effect that teachers expressed a low level of confidence in effectively changing intentional problem behaviour beyond the "immediate situation" (p. 306). The pessimism that teachers demonstrated took form in restricted language, demands for behaviour change, little behaviour instruction, goals limited to short term behaviour control, limited rewards and supportive teacher behaviour, and a "frequent reliance on punishment or

threatening/pressuring behaviour" (p. 306). Brophy and Rohrkemper linked their findings to research previously conducted on "helping behaviour" that "has established that withholding help is likely when victims are seen as responsible for their plights; that is, when observers attribute victims' problems to internal causes and see them as able to control their problem behaviour" (Simon & Weiner, cited in Brophy & Rohrkemper, 1981). They further "reported similar patterns for parole decisions: Punishment is most harsh and parole least likely when the offender is seen as the source of the problem, as having acted intentionally, and as likely to persist in criminal behaviour in the future" (p. 308). It was determined that "teachers' attributions about students' behaviour with teachers' goals and strategies for dealing with these problems parallel these results" (p. 308). Brophy and Rohrkemper attribute this to five factors that are involved when a teacher deals with teacher-owned problems: the high risk factors to the teacher's role status; administrative expectations; the visibility of the problem (i.e., they occur in the presence of the class); teachers believe in the controllability of these behaviours; and finally, teachers have low expectations in effecting long-term positive change. This results in teacher

strategies that are characterized by "punishment, restricted language, and minimizing of long term mental health goals in favour of short term or desist attempts" (p. 308). The authors suggest that such an approach to students presenting teacher-owned problems (E/BD students) "can lead to self-defeating expectations and behaviour, resulting in deterioration of the teacher-student relationship and escalation of the behaviour problem" (p. 309).

### Teacher Role Perceptions

The teacher-student relationship is a social-interactive one. The perceptions the teachers bring with them of their role as teacher may well have a great impact on the outcome (negative or positive) of the relationship. Personal life history and experience of the teacher may have a profound effect on teacher behaviour. This has been referred to as "countertransference" by Maag (1991) and "can result in teachers behaving in rejecting and hostile ways towards students" (Watkins, 1985, cited in Maag, 1991, p. 8). Further to this there is much research on the subject of teacher personality, good teachers, poor teachers and the subsequent value systems they bring with them to the profession. There is much discussion and

rhetoric resulting in non-definitive findings other than teachers do bring their perceptions of their role to them and that these perceptions tend to persist throughout the teacher's career. Tardif (1985) states "It is obvious that the forces of socialization are very powerful in the school setting" (p. 147). Chase (1985) refers to teachers' needs for esteem and self-actualization to promote self-fulfillment in the profession. It can be concluded that the introduction of students into the class setting who may further challenge the attainment of these teacher needs and therefore the fulfillment of the teacher's perceived role would at best be strongly resisted. Heck and Williams (1984) define this succinctly.

People are capable of using themselves more creatively if the conditions that support creative responses, choices and actions are present. These supportive conditions, according to Rogers (1967), include trustworthiness, empathy, caring, psychological freedom, and psychological safety. Human potential is increased when these supportive conditions are strengthened. (p. 4)

These researchers go on to illuminate various methodologies that might enhance those conditions. They do not, however, discuss

conditions that may threaten or weaken those conditions. Getzels and Jackson (1963) state that "the personality of the teacher is a significant variable in the classroom" (p. 506). They proceed to review research conducted regarding teacher personality as it relates to teacher effectiveness with the conclusion that "the regrettable fact is that many of the studies so far have not produced significant results" (p. 574). Of relevance to this work is the fact that teacher personality as well as teacher perception of their role in the classroom setting may have a significant impact on the successful inclusion of special needs students. This especially holds true in light of the vast amount of literature that pertains to teacher bias and negativity that surrounds the E/BD student.

### Summary

Special education services and mainstreaming practices for students identified as emotionally/behaviourally disordered can be described as "particularly problematic" at best. The conceptual biases about this population's problems may be a significant factor in determining the nature of the negativism, frustration and pessimism that surrounds these students. Through understanding

and research, a feasible, effective and more humane approach to special education for the emotionally/behaviourally disordered student may be the norm. This would be a vast improvement from what appears to be the more accepted practice based on the precepts of "control, contain, and punish" (Cook et al., 1990, p. 19) "in the assumption that these students simply need to be forced to behave more appropriately" (Weinberg & Weinberg, 1990, cited in Cook et al., 1990, p. 19).

The evidence and implications contained within the literature go far in specifying the major factors (consistently negative in nature) affecting the future implementation of mainstreaming initiatives. Factors such as teacher biases and attitudes directed negatively toward the E/BD student population; the negative influences of a perceived "pygmalion effect"; the negative effects of labelling; teacher belief in intentionality, controllability and problem ownership; strong conceptual biases as well as teacher role perception and personality are all influences that serve to make the issue of mainstreaming the E/BD student very complex and challenging, but not without promise. From the literature there are several research needs that have been identified and are as follows:

there is a need for research in more naturalistic settings using "real" teachers and "real" students as participants; there is a need to research strategies and methodologies that would assist and support those teachers within the context of the regular classroom; there is a need to change existing conceptual biases through education; there is a consistently stated need for improved pre-service and on-going in-service education about the E/BD student population in the mainstream; and additionally, there is a need for research with respect to teacher attitudes to, and mainstreaming of, the E/BD child at the upper grade levels. There is the promise that from the perceived problems of special education with respect to mainstreaming the emotionally/behaviourally disordered student, can come the solutions if researchers and educators work, in concert, to that end.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

### Introduction

As was described in Chapter Two, the literature relating to teacher attitude towards the E/BD student has demonstrated that there exists a definite teacher bias against these students when they are placed in the regular classroom setting. There is also much research on the negative attitudes demonstrated by regular education teachers in dealing with student exceptionalities in the regular class setting (Larrivee & Cook, 1979). In addition, possible implications for the successful implementation of inclusion initiatives have been discussed. The current study continues this line of research by focusing on the attitudes and confidence levels as they relate to the emotionally/behaviourally disordered student in middle level classrooms in Ontario schools.

### Sample and Population

For the purposes of this study one school board was chosen to provide a sample of convenience of grade six, seven and eight teachers. This school board is located in southern Ontario. In such a setting students are traditionally placed in a "home room" situation



with one teacher who has the greatest instructional contact with that particular group or class usually for the subjects of language arts and math. The students then rotate through the school to receive instruction from other teaching staff in content areas other than home room subjects (i.e., history, geography, music, etc.).

### The School Board

The school board selected has as a component of school organization at the middle school level, resource/withdrawal classrooms for the emotionally/behaviourally disordered students. In such a setting, students with this identified handicap are placed on the regular classroom roster commensurate with their peer group. These students would receive instruction in the resource/withdrawal classroom for varying periods of time as dictated by student need and severity of handicap, however, they are regularly included (denotes full time placement in the regular education classroom) or integrated (refers to part time placement in the regular classroom) with their peer group to receive instruction in the regular classroom as much as possible. This component, as stated, exists in five of the middle school settings in this board.

Other E/BD students are serviced through a full inclusion model whereby the student is placed in a regular classroom according to his/her peer group and is serviced through resource personnel within the context of the regular classroom setting. Additional resourcing of the regular education teachers is also carried out within the context of the regular classroom setting. Regular classroom teachers in this board have had frequent and regular contact with E/BD students in their classrooms.

The current study was conducted in January and allowed for a two-week response time with a follow up reminder after the first week. It was believed that given these conditions, the sample would be representative of teacher attitude at the middle school level. Co-operation was secured from the director of the board, the special education consultant, and from the individual principals and teachers within the schools. The research instrument in the form of a questionnaire was distributed to all teaching staff of grades six, seven and eight and was returned through the school mail in sealed envelopes to the researcher to ensure anonymity. A total of 173 questionnaires were distributed; 94 completed questionnaires were returned for a return rate of 54.3 percent.

### Instrumentation

The questionnaire used in this study consisted of two sections. The first section entitled "Demographic Information" included fixed variables (age, gender, years teaching experience, teacher education, in-service training, special education training, training specific to emotional/behavioural disorders) plus teacher perception variables (competence, personal success, student success). The second section of the questionnaire was a modified version of Larrivee and Cook's (1979) Teacher Opinion Scale. This particular research was substantiated by Green, Rock and Weisenstein (1983). The thrust of their investigation was purely to examine the validity and reliability of the Larrivee and Cook (1979) Attitudes Toward Mainstreaming Scale (ATMS). This study was conducted on a much smaller scale than that done by Larrivee and Cook (1979) and used undergraduate preservice teachers and graduate students. It was determined that regardless of the small response rate (30%) the response data would be sufficient and feasible to use in the investigation of scale properties. It was determined that "all measures had reliability levels acceptable for research purposes"

(1983, p. 183). The modifications made to the scale for this research study placed the focus on the emotionally/behaviourally disordered student specifically rather than on special needs students in a general sense (see Appendix A). The second section of the survey required teachers to respond to 30 statements regarding E/BD students indicating extent of agreement on a Likert five-point scale (see Appendix A). The questions address the issues surrounding teacher attitude and perceptions in dealing effectively with the E/BD student in the regular grade six, seven and eight classroom settings. Questions 1, 2, 8, 13, 16, 20, 22 and, 27 address the issue of perceived teacher confidence and ability. Questions 4, 10, 11, 12, 18, 23 and, 25 address the issue of teacher perception of success of E/BD students in grades six, seven and eight with respect to social, emotional and academic growth. Teacher perception of E/BD students and the effect of E/BD students in the presence of the regular grade six, seven and eight classes is addressed in questions 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 24, 26, 29 and 30. One additional question, question 28, addresses the issue of teacher belief in the right of inclusion opportunities for E/BD students at the grades six, seven and eight levels. It was the intent of this study to determine

attitude and perception with regard inclusionary practices for the E/BD student. The reliability coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) was .92 for the final survey (see Appendix C for item analysis).

### Limitations

The limitations of this study appear to be related to the size and site of the research population. The size of the population was restricted to those teachers employed by one board of education located in an urban centre in southern Ontario. The research instrument was one that was devised through modification of an existing instrument created by Larrivee and Cook (1979). The instrument cited was one that referred to teacher attitudes relating to the learning disabled population while the revised instrument used in this research study focused on teacher attitude pertaining to emotionally/behaviourally disordered students. The research instrument used for the research study in this thesis was field tested. Through the examination of this pilot study it was believed that the results were reliable as they relate to the research questions specified.

### The Pilot Study

The research instrument was field tested in a pilot study conducted in a single school setting in an urban school board. The sample population consisted of grade six, seven and eight teachers in a middle school. Twenty questionnaires were sent out with 16 responding. The study was limited in scope but it was believed that due to the high rate of return, the findings would be reliable and therefore valid. Much information was gleaned from this study. The most significant findings are reported here. Teachers expressed a general negativism towards the E/BD child in the inclusive classroom. They expressed the belief that teachers are not well prepared professionally to teach this very special group of children. Those teachers who indicated success with the E/BD child in their regular classrooms, also expressed a self-perception of success. This positive self-perception appeared to be key in the success of the E/BD student, a finding that was not unlike that of Larrivee and Cook (1979). Teachers who expressed self-perceptions of success reported success with the E/BD student in the regular class setting at a significantly higher rate than teachers who did not have this perception of themselves ( $p < .05$ ). Teachers who indicated a self-

perception of success combined with completed course work and/or in-service training specific to the needs of the E/BD child reported success with these students at a significantly higher level than those teachers without completed course work and/or in-service training and without a self-perception of success ( $p < .01$ ). Of further note from the pilot study, of all respondents, 75% reported that the E/BD student should be afforded the opportunity wherever possible to receive educational service in the inclusive classroom. This rather interesting anomaly (we don't want them, we don't know how to teach them, but we'll take them) is addressed by O'Reilly and Duquette (1988) and Rogers (cited in O'Reilly & Duquette, 1988). Two possible keys to the successful implementation of inclusionary practice as it pertains to the E/BD child appear to be:

- . positive teacher self-perception; and,
- . teacher education specific to the needs of the E/BD student.

The larger research study was conducted to determine if these findings would be borne out as well as to determine what other factors may have importance in planning for the inclusion of the E/BD student in the regular class setting.

## Research Questions

The following research questions in the form of hypothesis were tested through an examination of the data:

- . do grade six, seven and eight teachers express differing degrees of confidence in teaching the E/BD student in the context of the regular class setting;
- . do grade six, seven and eight teachers with more years experience express greater confidence in teaching the E/BD student in their regular education classes than their less experienced peers;
- . do grade six, seven and eight teachers believe that they are well qualified and/or trained to teach E/BD students in the regular class setting;
- . do grade six, seven and eight teachers exhibit negative biases towards the E/BD student population;
- . do grade six, seven and eight teachers hold negative expectations of the E/BD student;
- . do grade six, seven and eight teachers with more years teaching experience hold a more positive attitude towards the E/BD student in the regular class setting than their less experienced peers;
- . do grade six, seven and eight teachers with more course work



and/or in-service training in special education and/or the specific needs of the E/BD student hold a more positive attitude towards the E/BD student in their regular education classes than those teachers who do not have this additional education and/or training;

. do female educators at the grade six, seven and eight level express greater confidence than male educators in teaching the E/BD student in the regular class setting;

. do grade six, seven and eight teachers believe that E/BD students should have the opportunity to participate in the regular class setting when ever possible.

### Data Analysis

The data will be analyzed using the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences*. The analysis included frequencies, percentages and contingency analysis including chi-square. Please note that the resulting analysis presented in Chapter Four reflects a reduction in the number of categories appearing in the survey. This reduction was necessitated by the low number of responses and was accomplished by combining the categories of Strongly Agree with Agree under the category Strongly Agree, and the categories Strongly Disagree with

Disagree under the category Strongly Disagree.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

### Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the study. There are essentially two sections to the findings. The first is the report on the profile of the respondents, the second is the survey results and findings.

### Profile of the Respondents

In this section a profile of the respondents is discussed. Table 1 describes the frequencies and percentages of the demographic and respondent information variables. Of the respondents 89% classified themselves as teachers while 11% described their role as "other." The "other" label described such educational roles as librarian, guidance counsellor and resource teacher. Thirty-two percent taught at the grade six level, 38% taught at the grade seven level while 30% stated that they taught at the grade eight level. Fifty-five percent of the respondents were female, 45% were male. With respect to years teaching experience 19% of the respondents had less than 4 years experience, 15% had 5 - 9 years experience and 66% of the respondents had more than 10 years experience. Years

experience at the middle school level (grades 6 through 8) was described by 26% having less than 3 years experience, 17% had 4 – 7 years experience and 57% claimed more than 8 years experience at this level. Seventy-nine percent of the respondents held a university degree, 18% held a masters level degree and 3% had neither. Thirty percent of the respondents had completed Ministry courses related to special education while 70% had not. Twenty-six percent of the respondents had completed in-service training in special education, 74% had not. Of the respondents just 25% had completed courses related specifically to emotionally/behaviourally disordered students. Additionally, 25% reported that they had completed in-service training related to inclusion of special needs students in the regular classroom.

#### Respondent Information Related to E/BD Students

The numbers reported above are dramatic in view of the fact that 89% of the respondents reported that they had had the experience of E/BD students in their regular classes. Of this group of 89%, only 24% believed that the E/BD student experienced some degree of academic success while 26% reported that the E/BD

student in the regular setting experienced behavioural success. Fifty percent of teachers reported that they perceived themselves as experiencing "average" success with the E/BD student in the regular class, 26% perceived that they had a "low" level of success, 10% perceived that they had a "very low" rate of success. Only 13% reported that they perceived a "high" level of success with 1% reporting a "very high" perceived level of success with the E/BD student in the regular class. Eighty-eight percent of all respondents described the availability of support services as being "very low" (23%), "low" (30%) to "average" (35%) while only 10% reported the availability of support services as being "high" with 2% reporting a "very high" degree of support services available.

### Profile Summary

The research sample of educators can be described as composed largely of university educated teachers with a high level of teaching experience at the middle school level. Of note is that the three grade levels are relatively equally represented and that

Table 1  
Profile of Respondents

Category	Sub Category	n	Percent
Teacher position	Teacher	84	89
	Other	10	11
Grade Level Taught	6	30	32
	7	36	38
	8	28	30
Gender	Female	51	55
	Male	42	45
	No Response	1	0
Years Experience	0 - 4	17	19
	5 - 9	14	15
	10 +	61	66
	No Response	2	0
Years Experience at 6,7,8 level	0 - 3	24	26
	4 - 7	16	17
	8 +	54	57
Level of education obtained	University Degree	74	79
	Masters Degree	17	18
	No Degree	3	3
Ministry Courses in Special Education	Yes	28	30
	No	66	70
In-service Training in Special Education	Yes	24	26
	No	69	74
	No Response	1	0

(Table Continues)

Table 1 (Continued)

Category	Sub Category	n	Percent
Course work related to E/BD students	Yes	23	25
	No	70	75
	No Response	1	0
In-service Training related to E/BD students	Yes	23	25
	No	71	76
In-service Training related to inclusion	Yes	36	38
	No	58	62
Experience with E/BD students in regular class setting	Yes	84	89
	No	10	11
E/BD students successful academically	Yes	20	24
	No	63	76
	No Response	11	0
E/BD students successful behaviourally	Yes	21	26
	No	60	74
	No Response	13	0
Teacher Success with E/BD students in regular class setting	Very Low	8	10
	Low	22	26
	Average	42	50
	High	11	13
	Very High	1	1
	No Response	10	0
Availability of additional support services	Very Low	21	23
	Low	28	30
	Average	32	35
	High	9	10
	Very High	2	2
	No Response	2	0

gender differences were minimal. Most of the respondents have had experience with the E/BD child in the regular setting and most of the respondents perceive these students as experiencing little success academically or behaviourally. Interestingly, a large portion of respondents (50%) reported that they perceived themselves as having a level of "average" success with these students.

### Results of the Teacher Opinion Survey

The Teacher Opinion Survey was intended to reveal teacher confidence and perception of ability, teacher attitude and expectations (biases), perceptions and beliefs as they relate to the E/BD student in the regular classroom. The results are presented in Table 2. The survey findings are discussed as they relate specifically to the research questions specified in Chapters One and Three. The data were examined through descriptive statistics as well as contingency analysis including chi-square. Demographic information included teacher position; grade level; gender; years experience; level of education obtained; and teacher perception of success in dealing with the E/BD student in the regular classroom. Findings are reported as they relate to the research questions.



Table 2  
Teacher Response to Survey Items

Survey Item	Level of Agreement Valid Percent (Actual)				
	SA	A	U	D	SD
SA=strongly agree A=agree U=uncertain D=disagree SD=strongly disagree					
1. Many of the things teachers do with regular students are appropriate for E/BD students.	10 (9)	47 (44)	14 (13)	19 (18)	10 (9)
2. The needs of E/BD students can best be served through special, separate classes.	31 (29)	27 (25)	24 (22)	15 (14)	3 (3)
3. An E/BD child's classroom behaviour generally requires more patience from the teacher than does the behaviour of a normal child.	73 (69)	22 (21)	1 (1)	1 (1)	2 (2)
4. The challenge of being in a regular classroom will promote the academic growth of the E/BD student.	4 (4)	17 (16)	31 (29)	34 (32)	14 (13)
5. The extra attention E/BD students require will be to the detriment of the other students.	33 (31)	45 (42)	10 (9)	10 (9)	3 (3)
6. Inclusion of E/BD students offers mixed group interaction which will foster understanding and acceptance of differences.	7 (6)	42 (39)	18 (17)	22 (20)	12 (11)
7. It is difficult to maintain order in a regular classroom that contains an E/BD student.	21 (20)	34 (32)	15 (14)	26 (24)	4 (4)
8. Regular teachers possess a great deal of the expertise necessary to work with E/BD students.	2 (2)	19 (18)	22 (21)	32 (30)	25 (23)
9. The behaviour of E/BD students will set a bad example for the other students.	12 (11)	35 (33)	19 (18)	29 (27)	5 (5)
10. Isolation in a special class has a negative effect on the social and emotional development of an E/BD student.	7 (7)	29 (27)	32 (30)	27 (25)	5 (5)

(Table Continues)

Table 2 (Continued)

	SA	A	U	D	SD
11. The E/BD student will probably develop academic skills more rapidly in a special classroom than in a regular classroom.	23 (22)	45 (42)	19 (18)	11 (10)	2 (2)
12. Most E/BD children do not make an adequate attempt to complete their assignments.	14 (13)	45 (2)	20 (19)	20 (9)	0 (1)
13. Inclusion of E/BD children will require significant changes in the regular classroom procedures.	27 (25)	38 (36)	16 (15)	17 (16)	2 (2)
14. Most E/BD children are well behaved in the classroom.	2 (2)	16 (15)	15 (14)	42 (39)	26 (24)
15. The contact regular class students have with inclusion E/BD students may be harmful.	5 (5)	22 (21)	26 (24)	39 (37)	7 (7)
16. Regular classroom teachers have sufficient training to teach E/BD students.	1 (1)	7 (7)	19 (18)	39 (37)	33 (31)
17. E/BD students will monopolize the teacher's time.	29 (27)	39 (37)	20 (19)	10 (9)	2 (2)
18. Inclusion of the E/BD student will promote their social independence.	3 (3)	38 (36)	30 (28)	17 (16)	12 (11)
19. It is likely that an E/BD child will exhibit behaviour problems in the regular classroom setting.	32 (30)	46 (43)	13 (12)	7 (7)	2 (2)
20. Behaviour programming is better done by resource room or special teachers than by regular classroom teachers.	34 (32)	39 (37)	21 (20)	5 (5)	0 (0)
21. The inclusion of E/BD students can be beneficial for regular students.	2 (2)	31 (29)	23 (22)	28 (26)	16 (15)
22. E/BD children need to be told exactly what to do and how to do it.	17 (16)	36 (34)	23 (22)	23 (22)	0 (0)

(Table Continues)

Table 2 (Continued)

	SA	A	U	D	SD
23. Inclusion is likely to have a negative effect on the emotional development of the E/BD student.	4 (4)	4 (4)	36 (34)	46 (43)	10 (9)
24. Increased freedom in the classroom creates too much confusion.	13 (12)	36 (33)	23 (21)	27 (25)	2 (2)
25. The E/BD child will be socially isolated by regular classroom students.	6 (6)	19 (18)	21 (20)	48 (45)	5 (5)
26. Parents of an E/BD child present no greater problem for a classroom teacher than those of a normal child.	4 (4)	33 (31)	27 (25)	22 (21)	14 (13)
27. Inclusion of E/BD children will necessitate extensive re-training of regular teachers.	29 (27)	42 (39)	13 (12)	16 (15)	1 (1)
28. E/BD students should be given every opportunity to function in the regular classroom setting, where possible.	12 (11)	56 (53)	14 (13)	11 (10)	7 (7)
30. The presence of E/BD students will promote acceptance of differences on the part of the regular students.	4 (4)	35 (33)	33 (31)	19 (18)	9 (8)

### Teachers and Self-Perception of Success

Through an examination of the results of the teacher survey particular note was made of a small group of the respondents who had identified themselves as successful. This group (14% of the respondents), while small, revealed significant findings in relationship to those respondents who did not have this successful self-perception. As issues are addressed these findings of significance are made note of as they pertain to this particular respondent group.

### Teacher Confidence

Although teacher confidence is linked to teacher perception of ability, teacher confidence was specifically addressed in questions 1, 16, 20 and 27. From question 1 it was found that 57% (Table 2) of the respondents believed that what teachers do in the regular class was appropriate for E/BD students. Seventy percent of all teacher respondents did not believe that regular classroom teachers have sufficient training to teach E/BD students in the regular classroom setting (question 16). Seventy-three percent of all respondents did not express confidence in programming for the E/BD child (question

20). Seventy percent of respondents stated that extensive re-training of regular education teachers would be needed to serve the E/BD student in the regular classroom (question 27). In short, most respondents believed that regular education teachers have neither the training nor the confidence necessary to teach the E/BD child in the regular setting. Additionally, most teachers believe that with the implementation of inclusion, extensive re-training would be required.

### Teacher Ability

Teacher perception of their ability to teach the E/BD student in the regular classroom can be examined through questions 2, 8, 13 and 22. Fifty-eight percent of all respondents believe that the E/BD student would be best served in a special, separate class rather than in the inclusive setting (question 2). Of interest is that this belief was most strongly expressed by the grade eight teachers and least strongly by the grade six teachers (Table 3). Although this finding was not significant, this tendency was in agreement with the findings of Larrivee and Cook (1979, p. 320). Of significance was the finding that teachers with more than 10 years experience

strongly disagreed with this statement more so than teachers with less than 10 years experience ( $p < .05$ , Table 4). When this question was examined in relation to teacher perception of success in dealing with the E/BD student, the finding was most significant. Those teachers who perceived success with the E/BD student in the regular setting strongly disagreed with the statement of student placement ( $p = .00001$ , Table 5). This correlates strongly with the findings of Larrivee and Cook (1979) who determined that "teacher perception of degree of success in dealing with the special-needs child is the single most important variable" (p. 321). Fifty-six percent of respondents believed that regular education teachers did not have the expertise necessary to teach E/BD students while 22% were uncertain (question 8). Sixty-four percent of the respondents believed that significant changes in regular classroom procedures would be required to accommodate the E/BD student (question 13). Fifty-three percent of teachers believed that the E/BD student would require direct instruction while 23% were uncertain (question 22).

Table 3

Crosstabulations of Teacher Preference for Special Class Placement of E/BD Students by Grade Level Taught

Level of Agreement		Grade Level Taught		
		6	7	8
Strongly Agree	%	50	60	64
	f	(15)	(21)	(18)
Uncertain	%	23	20	29
	f	(7)	(7)	(8)
Strongly Disagree	%	27	20	7
	f	(8)	(7)	(2)

$\chi^2 = 4.14123$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .38723$

Table 4

Crosstabulations of Teacher Preference for Special Class Placement of E/BD Students by Teacher Experience (years)

Level of Agreement		Years Teaching Experience		
		0 - 4	5 - 9	10 +
Strongly Agree	%	47	46	64
	f	(8)	(6)	(39)
Uncertain	%	41	46	15
	f	(7)	(6)	(9)
Strongly Disagree	%	12	8	21
	f	(2)	(1)	(13)

$\chi^2 = 9.43305$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .051$



Table 5

Crosstabulations of Teacher Preference for Special Class Placement of E/BD Students by Teacher Self-Perception of Success

Level of Agreement		Teacher Perception of Success		
		Very Low	Average	Very High
Strongly Agree	%	69	69	8
	f	(20)	(29)	(1)
Uncertain	%	24	19	18
	f	(7)	(8)	(2)
Strongly Disagree	%	7	12	75
	f	(2)	(5)	(9)

$\chi^2 = 29.41007$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .00001$

### Teacher Attitude and Bias

Teacher attitude and possible bias were examined through questions 4, 10, 11, 12, 18, 23 and 25. Academic success for the E/BD student would be promoted by placement in the regular class setting (question 4) was reported by only 22% of the respondents. Significant findings were revealed by teachers who perceived themselves as successful with E/BD students in the regular class. Significantly more of these teachers believed that academic success would be promoted for the E/BD student in the regular setting ( $p < .05$ , Table 6). The perception of poor academic growth appears to be supported in the response to question 11. Sixty-eight percent of all respondents believed that the E/BD student would probably develop academic skills more rapidly in the special class placement. Findings of significance were revealed by those teachers perceiving themselves as successful with the E/BD student. This teacher group disagreed with the above statement significantly more than those teachers who perceived themselves as having very little success to the  $p = .00047$  level of significance (Table 7). While 59% of all teacher respondents reported that they did not believe that the E/BD student worked well in the regular

Table 6  
 Crosstabulations of Promotion of Academic Growth for the E/BD  
 Student in the Regular Class Setting by Teacher Self-Perception of  
 Success

Level of Agreement		Teacher Perception of Success		
		Very Low	Average	Very High
Strongly Agree	%	13	19	50
	f	(4)	(8)	(6)
Uncertain	%	27	41	0
	f	(8)	(17)	(0)
Strongly Disagree	%	60	41	50
	f	(18)	(17)	(6)

$\chi^2 = 12.25873$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .01$

Table 7

Crosstabulations of More Rapid Academic Growth for the E/BD Student in the Special Class Placement by Teacher Self-Perception of Success

Level of Agreement		Teacher Perception of Success		
		Very Low	Average	Very High
Strongly Agree	%	80	69	33
	f	(24)	(29)	(4)
Uncertain	%	10	26	17
	f	(3)	(11)	(2)
Strongly Disagree	%	10	5	50
	f	(3)	(2)	(6)

$\chi^2 = 20.14570$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .00047$

class (question 12) this same group of "teachers with self-perceived success" disagreed with the statement and significantly disagreed with the teachers who had a very low self-perceived level of success ( $p < .01$ , Table 8). The findings with respect to the negative effects on the social/emotional growth of the E/BD student in the segregated setting were non specific, with teachers equally divided in their opinions (question 10 and 18). It is interesting to note, however, that the negative effect of inclusion on the emotional development of the E/BD child (question 23) was perceived most significantly by the male respondents ( $p < .05$ , Table 9). The male respondents additionally identified the E/BD student as being socially isolated in the regular class placement (question 25) ( $p < .05$ , Table 10). This is in stark contrast to the teachers who perceived themselves as successful with the E/BD student population in the regular class. These teachers did not perceive these students as being socially isolated ( $p < .05$ , Table 11).

### Acceptance of Differences

The acceptance of differences is viewed in this research as one indicator of positive attitude. The survey questions 6, 21, 26 and 30

Table 8  
 Crosstabulations of Inadequacy of E/BD Students to Complete  
 Assignments by Teacher Self-Perception of Success

Level of Agreement		Teacher Perception of Success		
		Very Low	Average	Very High
Strongly Agree	%	83	49	42
	f	(25)	(20)	(5)
Uncertain	%	10	27	8
	f	(3)	(11)	(1)
Strongly Disagree	%	7	24	50
	f	(2)	(10)	(6)

$\chi^2 = 15.38274$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .00397$

Table 9

Crosstabulations of Negative Effect of Inclusion on Emotional Development of E/BD Student by Teacher Gender

Level of Agreement		Gender	
		Female	Male
Strongly Agree	%	2	17
	f	(1)	(7)
Uncertain	%	39	33
	f	(20)	(14)
Strongly Disagree	%	59	50
	f	(30)	(21)

$\chi^2 = 6.33542$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = .04210$

Table 10

Crosstabulations of Social Isolation of the E/BD Child by Regular Classroom Students by Teacher Gender

Level of Agreement		Gender	
		Female	Male
Strongly Agree	%	14	38
	f	(7)	(16)
Uncertain	%	28	14
	f	(14)	(6)
Strongly Disagree	%	59	48
	f	(30)	(20)

$\chi^2 = 7.92499$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = .01902$



Table 11

Crosstabulations of the Social Isolation of the E/BD Child by the Regular Classroom Students by Teacher Self-Perception of Success

Level of Agreement		Teacher Perception of Success		
		Very Low	Average	Very High
Strongly Agree	%	43	21	0
	f	(13)	(9)	(0)
Uncertain	%	20	21	8
	f	(6)	(9)	(1)
Strongly Disagree	%	37	57	92
	f	(11)	(24)	(11)

$\chi^2 = 12.55697$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .01366$

addressed this issue directly. Question 6 stated that the E/BD student in the regular setting will foster understanding and the acceptance of differences. Forty-eight percent of the respondents agreed while 33% disagreed. Two thirds of all respondents stated that they believed that the E/BD student in the regular class would not be beneficial (question 21) and about two thirds of all teacher respondents did not view inclusion as a means of promoting the acceptance of differences (question 30). With respect to working with the parents of the E/BD child (question 26) most teachers stated that they believed these parents posed a greater problem than parents of regular students. Of note here is that the group of teachers who perceived themselves as successful with E/BD students in the inclusive class showed a tendency to be more positively disposed but the findings were not significant.

### Demands on Teacher Time

The demands that E/BD students on the teachers' time in the regular setting is a concern that may impact negatively on teachers being positively inclined towards the inclusion of the E/BD student. Teachers expressed the concern that their time would be spent

dealing with a few students perhaps with negative effects for the regular students. Ninety-five percent of all respondents stated that they believed that the E/BD student required more patience from them than the regular education student (question 3). Sixty-eight percent of all teacher respondents stated that they believed the E/BD child in the regular class would monopolize the teacher's time (question 17).

### Behaviour Management Concerns

There are many concerns with respect to inclusion; however, when inclusion involves the E/BD student, these concerns tend to focus on behaviour issues. E/BD students are considered by many to create confusion in the classroom. The findings indicated that teachers are almost equally divided on this issue. Some report that confusion in the classroom is attributable to increased freedom (49%, question 24), while about as many of the respondents attributed confusion in the classroom specifically to the presence of E/BD students (50%, question 29). Of interest was the finding that more experienced teachers perceive the E/BD student as causing more confusion in the classroom than the inexperienced

teachers. By the same token, inexperienced teachers were more uncertain in their views (Table 12). More experienced teachers have had time to develop set routines and expectations for behaviour and discipline. Regardless, the behaviour of the E/BD student in the regular class setting is viewed as a source of disruption. Sixty-eight percent of the respondents did not believe that the E/BD student would be well behaved in the regular class (question 14). In fact, 78% of all respondents expected that the E/BD student would exhibit behaviour problems in the regular class setting (question 19). Of note is that male teachers expected this less than female teachers ( $p < .05$ , Table 13). With the above findings in mind, it is not surprising to note that 55% of all respondents believed that they had more difficulty with classroom control with the inclusion of the E/BD student (question 7).

Of particular interest with respect to classroom control was the finding that teachers with the least level of education reported the least difficulty (33%) while those respondents with the highest level of education reported the greatest difficulty (71%, Table 14). This may be due to higher expectations on the part of those respondents with higher levels of education but such a

determination would require more research study.

### Contagion Concerns

The concern that the inclusion of the E/BD student into the regular class setting may have a contagion effect on the regular student is addressed in questions 5, 9 and 15. Seventy-eight percent of respondents stated that the extra attention required of the teacher by the E/BD student would be to the detriment of the others in the class room (question 5). Teachers with more experience found this to be more so than teachers with the less experience ( $p < .01$ , Table 15). Teachers who perceived themselves as successful in dealing with the E/BD student in the regular setting disagreed significantly with the detrimental aspect more so than those teachers with very low self-perceived success ( $p < .01$ , Table 16). Almost half of all respondents stated that they believed that the behaviour of the E/BD students in the regular class setting would set a bad example for the others in the class (question 9). Twenty-seven percent of all respondents stated that they believed that the contact regular education students would have with E/BD students in the inclusive classroom would be harmful (question 15).

Table 12

Crosstabulations of E/BD Students Creating More Confusion in the Regular Classroom by Teacher Experience (years)

Level of Agreement		Years Experience		
		0 - 4	5 - 9	10 +
Strongly Agree	%	29	64	53
	f	(5)	(9)	(32)
Uncertain	%	65	21	16
	f	(11)	(3)	(10)
Strongly Disagree	%	6	14	31
	f	(1)	(2)	(19)

$\chi^2 = 18.30806$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .00107$

Table 13

Crosstabulations of the E/BD Student Exhibiting Behaviour Problems  
in the Regular Class Setting by Teacher Gender

Level Of Agreement		Gender	
		Female	Male
Strongly Agree	%	88	64
	f	(45)	(27)
Uncertain	%	8	19
	f	(4)	(8)
Strongly Disagree	%	4	17
	f	(2)	(7)

$\chi^2 = 7.81332$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = .02011$

Table 14

Crosstabulations of Difficulty in Maintaining Order in a Classroom That Contains an E/BD Student by Level of Teacher Education

Level of Agreement	Level of Teacher Education		
		No Degree	University Degree    Masters Degree
Strongly Agree	% f	33 (1)	53 (39)    71 (12)
Uncertain	% f	67 (2)	12 (9)    18 (3)
Strongly Disagree	% f	0 (0)	35 (26)    12 (2)

$\chi^2 = 10.38448$ ,     $df = 4$ ,     $p = .03443$



Table 15

Crosstabulations of Extra Attention E/BD Students Require Will be to the Detriment of the Other Students by Teacher Experience (years)

Level of Agreement		Years Teaching Experience		
		0 - 4	5 - 9	10 +
Strongly Agree	%	53	93	80
	f	(9)	(13)	(49)
Uncertain	%	29	7	5
	f	(5)	(1)	(3)
Strongly Disagree	%	18	0	15
	f	(3)	(0)	(9)

$\chi^2 = 12.32856$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .01507$

Table 16

Crosstabulations of Extra Attention E/BD Students Will Require Will be to the Detriment of the Other Students by Teacher Self-Perception of Success

Level of Agreement		Teacher Perception of Success		
		Very Low	Average	Very High
Strongly Agree	%	97	67	67
	f	(29)	(28)	(8)
Uncertain	%	3	17	0
	f	(1)	(7)	(0)
Strongly Disagree	%	0	17	33
	f	(0)	(7)	(4)

$\chi^2 = 14.93399$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .00484$

### Inclusion Opportunity

Sixty-eight percent of all respondents stated that they believed the E/BD student should be given the opportunity to receive educational service in the regular classroom setting wherever possible. Only 7% of all respondents were found to be in strong opposition to such an opportunity. Of interest was the fact that 92% of teachers with self-perceived success in dealing with E/BD students in the regular setting were in strong agreement and appear to believe that the E/BD student is appropriately placed in the regular class (Table 17).

### Additional Findings

Through the research findings it is indicated that perceived teacher success was closely linked to confidence and attitude. Focussing attention on the group of teachers who perceived themselves as successful in dealing with the E/BD child in the regular class setting, some additional findings of note and significance were revealed. Of the teachers with very high success perceptions 50% taught at the grade 6 level, 42% taught at the grade 7 level while only 8% taught at the grade 8 level (Table 18). Sixty-

Table 17

Crosstabulations of E/BD Students Should be Given Every Opportunity to Function in the Regular Setting by Teacher Self-Perception of Success

Level of Agreement		Teacher Perception of Success		
		Very Low	Average	Very High
Strongly Agree	%	57	69	92
	f	(17)	(29)	(11)
Uncertain	%	20	14	0
	f	(6)	(6)	(0)
Strongly Disagree	%	23	17	8
	f	(7)	(7)	(1)

$\chi^2 = 5.11158$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .27604$

Table 18

Crosstabulations of Grade Level Taught by Teacher Self-Perception of Success

Grade Level Taught		Teacher Perception of Success		
		Very Low	Average	Very High
6	%	33	26	50
	f	(10)	(11)	(6)
7	%	40	43	42
	f	(12)	(18)	(5)
8	%	27	31	8
	f	(8)	(13)	(1)

$\chi^2 = 3.52822$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .47360$

seven percent of these same teachers were female while 33% were male (Table 19).

Of particular interest was the finding that of those teachers with a very high success perception, 82% had 10 or more years teaching experience (Table 20).

Level of education, Ministry courses and in-service courses in special education did not produce significant findings. Teacher self-perception of success was influenced by course work specific to the needs of the E/BD student ( $p < .01$ , Table 21). In-service training specific to the needs of the E/BD student also had a positive influence on teacher self-perception of success ( $p < .05$ , Table 22). In-service training dealing with inclusion issues but not specific to the E/BD student had no significant impact for this group of teachers who had a high self-perception of success. This same group of teachers perceived that the E/BD student experienced success in their classrooms significantly more than those teachers who perceived themselves as having very low success levels ( $p < .01$ , Table 23). The teachers with a high level of self-perceived success with the E/BD student also reported significantly higher levels of behavioural success for the E/BD student in their classrooms

compared to those teachers who perceived their success to be very low ( $p < .05$ , Table 22). From these findings it can be determined that those teachers who perceive themselves as experiencing a high level of success in dealing with the E/BD student in the regular class setting are those teachers who are described as largely grade 6 teachers, female, with 10 or more years teaching experience and who have completed course work and/or in-service training specific to the needs of the E/BD child. These same teachers reported significantly higher rates of academic and behavioural success for the E/BD student in their care.

### Summary

Through an examination of the research data it was found that grade six, seven and eight teachers do not express confidence in teaching the E/BD student in the context of the regular class setting. Further, those teachers with more years experience may feel more confident in teaching E/BD students if they perceive themselves as being successful in dealing with the E/BD child in the regular class setting. Teachers at the grade levels six through eight do not believe they are well qualified to teach the E/BD student in

Table 19

Crosstabulations of Teacher Gender by Teacher Self-Perception of Success

Teacher Gender		Teacher Perception of Success		
		Very Low	Average	Very High
Female	%	55	55	67
	f	(16)	(23)	(8)
Male	%	45	45	33
	f	(13)	(19)	(4)

$\chi^2 = .57693$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = .74941$



Table 20

Crosstabulations of Years of Teaching Experience by Teacher Self-Perception of Success

Years Experience		Teacher Perception of Success		
		Very Low	Average	Very High
0 - 4	%	20	24	0
	f	(6)	(10)	(0)
5 - 9	%	13	17	18
	f	(4)	(7)	(2)
10 +	%	67	59	82
	f	(20)	(24)	(9)

$\chi^2 = 3.60385$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .46226$

Table 21

Crosstabulations of Courses Completed Related Specifically to E/BD Students by Teacher Self-Perception of Success

Courses Completed		Teacher Perception of Success		
		Very Low	Average	Very High
Yes	%	13	22	58
	f	(4)	(9)	(7)
No	%	87	78	42
	f	(26)	(32)	(5)

$\chi^2 = 9.69380$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = .00785$

Table 22

Crosstabulations of In-Service Training Completed Related Specifically to the Needs of E/BD Students by Teacher Self-Perception of Success

In-Service Completed		Teacher Perception of Success		
		Very Low	Average	Very High
Yes	%	23	19	58
	f	(7)	(8)	(7)
No	%	77	81	42
	f	(23)	(34)	(5)

$\chi^2 = 7.64868$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = .02183$

Table 23

Crosstabulations of E/BD Student Academic Success in the Regular Class Setting by Teacher Self-Perception of Success

Academic Success		Teacher Perception of Success		
		Very Low	Average	Very High
Yes	%	3	34	42
	f	(1)	(14)	(5)
No	%	97	66	58
	f	(29)	(27)	(7)

$\chi^2 = 11.36071$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = .00341$

Table 24

Crosstabulations of E/BD Student Success Behaviourally in the Regular Class Setting by Teacher Self-Perception of Success

Behaviour Success		Teacher Perception of Success		
		Very Low	Average	Very High
Yes	%	17	23	58
	f	(5)	(9)	(7)
No	%	83	77	42
	f	(25)	(30)	(5)

$\chi^2 = 8.06662$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = .01772$

the regular class and largely believe that re-training will be necessary. Although teachers at the grade six, seven and eight level view these students as being more challenging and more difficult, these teachers do not view E/BD students in a significantly negative manner. Additionally, teachers in this study do not expect the E/BD student to experience success academically or behaviourally and expect these students to display behavioural difficulties in the regular class setting. It is interesting to note that teachers with more years teaching experience were found to hold a more positive attitude towards the E/BD child in their regular classes but that this attitude appears to be closely related to the teachers' self-perception of their own success. Further, this self-perception of success appears to be influenced by additional course work and/or in-service training specific to the needs of the E/BD student but not by more general courses and/or in-service training in special education and/or inclusion issues.

Of note was the finding that grade six, seven and eight teachers believe that the E/BD student should be given the opportunity to function in the regular classroom setting, where possible. This finding was true regardless of any other stated

beliefs, however negatively inclined they may be.

The findings from this research study indicate specific recommendations for the planning and implementation of inclusion as it pertains to the E/BD student. The findings also hold certain implications for further research directions. These are discussed in Chapter Five.

## CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Introduction

Inclusion practices continue to gain strength and momentum with the passage of time. It remains to be seen whether such practices are well-founded in the research as being "best practice" for the delivery of service to special needs children. This methodology takes on critical proportions when examined with respect to those students who are labelled and/or referred to as emotionally/behaviourally disordered. Regardless of the basis for implementation of inclusionary practice, factors that may hold positive and negative influences need to be examined. The research reported here attempted to document teacher attitude as one of these factors and to determine differences among groups of teachers in their reaction to E/BD students. This factor has been found to be a very relevant component to the inclusion of E/BD students (Kelly, Bullock & Dykes, 1977; Larrivee & Cook, 1979; O'Reilly & Duquette, 1988; Stephens & Braun, 1980; Wilson, 1988). A review of the literature revealed that there is a considerable body of evidence that supports the statement that teacher variables may have a great



influence on the success of inclusion practice as it relates to the E/BD student. Teacher attitude and perception emerge as the most significant of these variables (Antonak, 1980; Algozzine, Mercer & Countermine, 1977; Brophy, 1983; Brophy & Rohrkemper, 1981; Downing, Simpson & Myles, 1990; Silberman, 1969). To begin with, this segment of the student population was found to have the highest rejection rates among regular educators (Vandivier & Vandivier, 1981). Add to this that teachers are not convinced that inclusion is "sound pedagogical practice" (O'Reilly & Duquette, 1988, p. 12). They are not sure that academic learning is taking place, inclusion is disruptive, and inclusion is to the detriment of the regular students (O'Reilly & Duquette, 1988). The literature is extensive as it relates to teacher attitude. Teacher attitude is expressed through behaviour as well as through expectations (Good & Brophy, 1972; Silberman, 1969). Teacher behaviour and expectation may well produce a "pygmalion effect" as described by Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) and supported in theory by many others ( Brophy, 1983; Mason, 1973, Persell, 1977, Seaver, 1973, cited in Brophy, 1983). Carr, Taylor and Robinson (1991) describe the class as a reciprocal social system and therefore there exist reciprocal behavioural as well as academic

influences which they describe as a "joint pygmalion effect" (Fieldman & Theiss, 1982). The above cited theories are closely linked to theories described as "self-fulfilling prophecies" (Cooper & Good, 1983). Labelling effects are seen as denoting an "expectation set" (Blease, 1983). The labelling of children places the child so labelled into a situation whereupon the teacher will alter their objective evaluation of the child (Ysseldyke & Foster, 1978). The label "emotionally/behaviourally disordered" carries with it negative evaluative components that may well serve to maintain the child in the "expectation set" with the result that successful inclusion may be made extremely difficult. Teachers may also find the behaviour of such labelled students as personally offensive and thus wish to exclude and/or avoid involvement with the E/BD student (Cook et al., 1990). Teacher attitude may have a large influence on perception of the role the E/BD child will have in his/her regular classroom. Teachers view these children as having a "contagion" effect on the others in their care (Safran & Safran, 1985). This strengthens the bias of teachers against inclusion of the E/BD student. Conceptual bias of the disability adds to the concern and negativity surrounding these students. Teachers view this

disability as simply one of problem ownership and intentionality (Cook et al., 1990). The E/BD student owns the problem and all that needs to be done is for the student to decide to change his/her behaviour. Such conceptual biases result in the delivery of service as being one of "control, contain and punish in the assumption that these students simply need to be forced to behave more appropriately" (Cook et al., 1990, Weinberg & Weinberg, cited in Cook et al., 1990, p. 19). A final consideration here is the teachers' perception of themselves in the teacher's role. Teachers do not perceive themselves as cast in the role of "special educator" or "behaviour specialist" and therefore may actively resist any attempts to place E/BD students in their regular education classrooms.

### Summary of the Findings

From the research conducted through this study it was found that grade 6, 7, and 8 teachers do not express confidence in dealing with the E/BD child in the regular class setting. Teachers at these grade levels additionally do not believe that they are well qualified to teach E/BD students. Of note is the finding that generally

teachers at these grade levels do not have an overly negative view of the E/BD child and in fact believe that these students should be given every opportunity to participate in the regular setting where possible. This rather positive outlook is countered by the view from the teachers that they do not expect the E/BD student to do well either academically or behaviourally in their classes; in fact, teachers expressed the belief that they expect the E/BD student to misbehave in their classes. Of particular interest was the findings as they related to the group of teachers who identified themselves as self-confident and successful in the classroom. It is through an examination of this group that keys to the possible successful inclusion of the E/BD student in the regular class setting may be found.

### Discussion

While the negativity surrounding the issue of inclusion of the E/BD student is great, it was found that teachers were largely in favour of the practice of giving these students the opportunity to participate in the regular class setting. This was found to be true for 75% of the teachers in the pilot study and held true for 68% in

the larger study reported herein.

Influences that were found to enhance positive teacher attitude were most importantly, teacher self-perception of their own success and resulting confidence in working with the E/BD child in the regular setting along with an understanding and knowledge of the E/BD student through course work and/or in-service training specific to this disability. This finding is supported in the findings of Larrivee and Cook (1978) who determined that teacher perception of themselves was perhaps the single most powerful influence on teacher attitude with regard to the exceptional student. These researchers also noted that positive teacher perception was enhanced through teacher education.

The respondents were evenly spread over three grade levels and were as evenly divided between male and female. Of those teachers who had a positive perception of their own success/confidence, the response to inclusion opportunities for the E/BD student was 92% in favour. Other findings from this teacher group were also most positive in their regard for the E/BD child. Of this group of teachers 67% were female, 82% had 10 or more years teaching experience and reported significantly higher levels of

success for the E/BD student academically to the  $p = .003$  level of significance and behaviourally to the  $p = .017$  level of significance. These successful/confident teachers were influenced by course work specific to the needs of the E/BD student ( $p = .007$  level of significance) as well as in-service training specific to the E/BD student ( $p = .02$  level of significance). In general terms it could be stated from the research findings that those teachers who had success with the E/BD student in the regular class setting were those teachers who were largely teaching at the grade 6 level, were female, had 10 or more years teaching experience, held a university degree (83%), and had completed course work and/or in-service training specific to the needs of the E/BD student. Of note here is that this group was represented at the grade 6 level by 50%, at the grade 7 level by 42% and at the grade 8 level by just 8%. This finding was also in keeping with the findings of Larrivee and Cook (1979) who concluded that as the course work by higher grade level increased in academic pressure for both student and teacher, the level of teacher perception of confidence and success dropped appreciably.

## Recommendations

The research findings cited in this study appear to have solid support in the literature. A noticeable difference is that the respondents from this study do not appear to be as negatively biased as was found in other similar research. This may be attributable to the fact that much of the literature is U.S. based and may reflect differences in service delivery beliefs and practices as well as legislation differences. Other similar research was dated. By way of example, the study conducted by Larrivee and Cook was completed in 1979. Awareness and teacher education may well reflect current trends that lend a more positive approach to exceptionalities in general as well as the E/BD disability specifically. Additionally, the research study described here was conducted on a small scale with 94 respondents limited to one urban board of education where resources may well be more readily available than elsewhere.

The recommendations from the findings are readily apparent. In planning for the inclusion of the E/BD student effectively, boards of education and/or school districts should consider the following:

- the teachers need to be well resourced through course work and/or in-service training specific to the needs of the E/BD student

population;

. on-going in-service training related specifically to the needs of the E/BD child should be offered those teachers who are asked to include the E/BD student(s) in their regular education classrooms;

. teachers receiving E/BD students for inclusion practices should be those teachers who are more experienced;

. inclusion practices for the E/BD student in the middle school should begin at the grade six level if at all appropriate; and,

. female teachers may well serve as positive role models or peer coaches for their male colleagues.

The more experienced teachers have had time to establish routines and expectations in their classrooms and may be at a level where they are more flexible and receptive to meeting the needs of the student. This would especially hold true of the E/BD student in the regular classroom. The teachers at the grade 6 level may well have more classroom time with the home room, meaning that the students are not necessarily subjected to as much movement through the rotary system as the higher grade levels. This affords the teacher and the E/BD student more working time together and more stability and predictability in expectations with more structure, all



of which allows for the flexibility necessary to meet the student's needs. This finding should be an indicator that initiatives with regard to the transition years of middle school and early secondary school may be well placed. Female teachers may be more patient and nurturing than their male counterparts and E/BD students may find that female teachers are somewhat less threatening. Male teachers were found to hold the belief that the E/BD student would experience more difficulty emotionally as well as socially than their female counterparts (Tables 8 & 9). These issues would form the basis for further research.

While it appears to be true that success for the E/BD student in the inclusionary classroom is dependent on teacher self-perception of success, it is disappointing to note that this special group of teachers accounted for only 14% of the total respondents in this study. There is evidence to suggest that this number could be dramatically increased through teacher education of a specific nature.

In light of the findings reported in the research, it is imperative that inclusion of E/BD students be well thought out and carefully planned for. Teachers receiving these students should be

carefully selected based on education and experience. Teachers lacking in the area of education in the E/BD disability should be resourced. Inexperienced teachers should be resourced but the research findings indicate that this group of inexperienced teachers should be allowed to develop their basic teaching skills for a number of years before E/BD students are placed in their classrooms. It is recognized that logistically this may be very difficult at best but it may also indicate a need to examine the structure of middle school teaching staffs carefully. No one staff should have an inordinate number of inexperienced teachers as members; it would seem preferable and wise to strike a balance between experienced and inexperienced educators distributed throughout the grade levels as equitably as possible. The need for on-going, preferably on-site (to encourage attendance) in-servicing and resourcing of teachers is highly indicated. Teacher collaboration, team building, peer coaching as well as mentoring may lend themselves to such endeavours.

However accomplished, the inclusion of the E/BD student at the middle school level needs to be planned for with due consideration, understanding and knowledge of both the E/BD students and the teachers expected to receive them. Once

implemented, teachers need support services and on-going resourcing to foster the positive teacher self-perception that seems so key to success for these students.

### Implications

The need for further research studies in this area is strongly indicated. Such studies should be more comprehensive in scope to include rural as well as suburban school districts to determine if the findings hold true. An extension of this research into both the lower and upper grades levels would be highly beneficial. Research of such a kind and nature to determine the implication of female advantage would be revealing. Further research into the area of teacher education might lead to a greater understanding of which teacher education model is most productive to positive teacher self-perception as it applies to teachers of the E/BD student in the inclusive setting. The point of experience that lends itself to more successful inclusion practices should be determined.

The larger question remains, do inclusion initiatives of any type actually benefit the E/BD child? There exists much research literature to suggest that delivery of service to this very special

population of students is best served through a cascade model rather than through an inclusionary model. This question was not addressed in this study but certainly would warrant further research. This study focussed on the influences that may be positively indicated for inclusion of the E/BD student. These influences have been identified as teacher self-perception of success and confidence which in turn appears to be highly influenced through education specific to the needs of the E/BD student and teacher experience. These three keys may well be the ones that unlock the door for the E/BD student to succeed in the inclusive classroom setting.

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**APPENDIX A: TEACHERS'S SURVEY**  
**INCLUSION OF EMOTIONALLY/BEHAVIOURALLY DISORDERED**  
**STUDENTS – TEACHER OPINION QUESTIONNAIRE**

**PART A – ALL ABOUT YOU**

PLEASE CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSES:

1. Your present position:
  1. classroom teacher
  2. resource teacher
  3. librarian
  4. guidance counsellor
  5. other
2. Your time is spent teaching mostly grade:
  1. six
  2. seven
  3. eight
3. Gender:
  1. female
  2. male
4. Years teaching experience:
  1. 0 – 4
  2. 5 – 9
  3. 10 +
5. Years teaching at grades 6,7,8:
  1. 0 – 3
  2. 4 – 7
  3. 8 +
6. Level of education obtained:
  1. university undergraduate degree
  2. M. A./M. Ed.
  3. None of the above
7. Have you completed Ministry course(s) in special education:
  1. yes
  2. no
8. Have you completed in-service training in special education:
  1. yes
  2. no
9. Have you completed course(s) related specifically to emotionally/behaviourally disordered students:
  1. yes
  2. no

(Survey Continues)

## Teacher Survey (con't)

10. Have you completed in-service training related specifically to emotionally/behaviourally disordered students:

1. yes                      2. no

11. Have you completed in-service training related to inclusion of special needs students in regular classroom settings:

1. yes                      2. no

12. Have you had experience with E/BD students (those who have been identified, IPRC'D, as well as those who haven't) in the regular classroom setting:

1. yes                      2. no

*If you answered "yes" to question 12, please answer # 13 and 14 before continuing on, if your answer was "no" proceed to question # 15 and continue on.*

13. Do you believe these students were successful:

- academically 1. yes      behaviourally 1. yes  
2. no                              2. no

14. Rate your degree of success to date in dealing with E/BD students in the regular classroom:

- Very low      Low      Average      High      Very High

15. The availability of additional support services for accommodating E/BD students such as resource room, resource teacher, etc., has been:

- Very low      Low      Average      High      Very high

## PART B - THE SURVEY

Please circle the number under the column that best describes your agreement or disagreement with the following statements. There are no correct answers; the best answers are those that honestly reflect your feelings.

Survey Item	Level of Agreement Valid Percent (Actual)				
	SA	A	U	D	SD
SA=strongly agree A=agree U=uncertain D=disagree SD=strongly disagree					
1. Many of the things teachers do with regular students are appropriate for E/BD students.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The needs of E/BD students can best be served through special, separate classes.	1	2	3	4	5
3. An E/BD child's classroom behaviour generally requires more patience from the teacher than does the behaviour of a normal child.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The challenge of being in a regular classroom will promote the academic growth of the E/BD student.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The extra attention E/BD students require will be to the detriment of the other students.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Inclusion of E/BD students offers mixed group interaction which will foster understanding and acceptance of differences.	1	2	3	4	5
7. It is difficult to maintain order in a regular classroom that contains an E/BD student.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Regular teachers possess a great deal of the expertise necessary to work with E/BD students.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The behaviour of E/BD students will set a bad example for the other students.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Isolation in a special class has a negative effect on the social and emotional development of an E/BD student.	1	2	3	4	5

(Survey Continues)



## Teacher Survey (Continued)

	SA	A	U	D	SD
11. The E/BD student will probably develop academic skills more rapidly in a special classroom than in a regular classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Most E/BD children do not make an adequate attempt to complete their assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Inclusion of E/BD children will require significant changes in the regular classroom procedures.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Most E/BD children are well behaved in the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
15. The contact regular class students have with inclusion E/BD students may be harmful.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Regular classroom teachers have sufficient training to teach E/BD students.	1	2	3	4	5
17. E/BD students will monopolize the teacher's time.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Inclusion of the E/BD student will promote their social independence.	1	2	3	4	5
19. It is likely that an E/BD child will exhibit behaviour problems in the regular classroom setting.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Behaviour programming is better done by resource room or special teachers than by regular classroom teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
21. The inclusion of E/BD students can be beneficial for regular students.	1	2	3	4	5
22. E/BD children need to be told exactly what to do and how to do it.	1	2	3	4	5

(Survey Continues)

## Teacher Survey (Continued)

	SA	A	U	D	SD
23. Inclusion is likely to have a negative effect on the emotional development of the E/BD student.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Increased freedom in the classroom creates too much confusion.	1	2	3	4	5
25. The E/BD child will be socially isolated by regular classroom students.	1	2	3	4	5
26. Parents of an E/BD child present no greater problem for a classroom teacher than those of a normal child.	1	2	3	4	5
27. Inclusion of E/BD children will necessitate extensive re-training of regular teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
28. E/BD students should be given every opportunity to function in the regular classroom setting, where possible.	1	2	3	4	5
29. E/BD children are likely to create confusion in the regular classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
30. The presence of E/BD students will promote acceptance of differences on the part of the regular students.	1	2	3	4	5
Thank you very much for completing this survey. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.					

## **APPENDIX B: COVER LETTERS**

### **Cover Letter 1: To The Teachers**

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Dear Grade Six, Seven and Eight Teachers,

I am a fellow teacher in Etobicoke and am currently working on my thesis for my Masters degree at Brock University. I need your help. My research topic relates to the inclusion of emotionally/behaviourally disordered students in the regular class setting. I need to determine teacher opinion about this topic. The focus is on grades six through eight. To accomplish this I ask that you take about 10 – 15 minutes of your time and fill in the enclosed questionnaire. Be careful not to put any identifying marks on the document to maintain anonymity . In order to ensure the validity of the results, it is important that as many teachers who teach grades six through eight as possible complete the questionnaire. Once completed, please return the questionnaire in the enclosed envelope. If you have any questions or concerns about the questionnaire, if you would like to know more about the research undertaken and/or would like feedback about the results, please contact me. I am very grateful to you for taking the time to participate.

## Cover Letter 2: Instructions to the Participants

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### Instructions to Participants

1. The questionnaire you have been asked to complete elicits information about your views on the inclusion of emotionally/behaviourally disordered students into the regular class setting. For the purpose of this research please regard as emotionally/behaviourally disordered that population of students whose disability manifests itself in emotional/behavioural manners that restrict their progress through the educational system academically and/or socially. The students referred to include both those students who have been formally identified (IPRC'D) and those who have not but are perceived by you, the teacher, as experiencing difficulties as specified above.
  2. The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather accurate information about teacher attitudes. There are no correct answers. Please provide your honest opinions to the statements presented.
  3. Please respond to all questions in PART A and PART B of the questionnaire.
  4. Anonymity of teachers will be maintained throughout this research. Please do not identify yourself on the questionnaire.
  5. Please return the completed questionnaire by January 28th in the envelope provided.
- Thank you for your participation, it is truly appreciated!

### Cover Letter 3: Cover Letter to the Principals

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Dear Principals,

Enclosed please find questionnaires for all grades six, seven and eight teachers. These questionnaires represent the basis of my research study to complete my thesis for a Masters Degree in Education. This research has been reviewed and approved by the Board and it is my understanding that a letter of support has been forwarded to you by Janice Dyer of the Research Department. All that is required of you is to distribute these questionnaires to your grade six, seven and eight teachers. They are instructed to send the completed questionnaires back to me through the Board mail in the enclosed envelopes. Please note that I have included a questionnaire for your information but you are not required to fill one in. Your support is greatly appreciated. Should you find that you require additional questionnaires, please contact me. Additionally, if you wish information regarding the research and/or feedback about the results, please do not hesitate to contact me. Again, thank you very much for your assistance and support.

**APPENDIX C: RESULTS OF ITEM ANALYSIS**

Scale:	Score:
N of Items	30.0
N of Examinees	94.0
Mean	3.384
Standard Deviation	0.575
Minimum	2.133
Maximum	5.000
Alpha	0.920
Mean Item-Total	0.547